

# THE MONTH

MARCH 1950

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EDMUND BLUNDEN

A DECADE IN RETROSPECT

JACQUETTA HAWKES

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AND THE THRESHOLD OF RELIGION

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The Month is edited from 114 Mount Street, W.1, GROsvenor 2995, and published by Longmans, Green & Co., Ltd., 6 & 7 Clifford Street, London W.1. Subscriptions may be addressed to any bookseller, or, in Great Britain, direct to the publishers; in U.S.A. to British Publications, Inc., 150 East 35th Street, New York 16, N.Y.; in France to W. H. Smith & Son, 248 Rue de Rivoli, Paris 1. The annual subscription is 30s., U.S.A. \$5.50, France, 1,500 fr. Single copies 2s. 6d., 50c., 150 fr.



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# POEMS

By

EDMUND BLUNDEN

## *"Thou"*

COMEST thou so, my little child,  
Already in such manner of grace  
—Humility's portraiture—to place,  
In meekness mild,  
Here at my feet this offering,—  
That which thy nurse had bidden thee bring?

And, spite of that, I hear thou playest  
Many a game of thine own wit;  
Sometimes thy mind or zeal will hit  
Whom thou gainsayest  
With clear refusal. Still, with thee,  
Soon as thou smilest, all agree.

## *The Child in Church*

How cold those tops of the sharp arches are!  
Nobody has climbed there since they first were made.  
This place seems greater, our old church, by far  
Than the early night through which, not much afraid,  
I hurried past the graves. I lately stole  
Where Maggie Parham in her box was left  
Five feet or seven feet down in an oblong hole  
Soon earthed and grassed. The chestnut husk is cleft  
Above her now, and conquerors shining brown  
I gathered there today. All stand. Sit down.  
My father's at the organ, boys and men  
In surplices all ready; and look, out there  
The chief folk of the parish. Glory again  
Is come; so sing we—each one, do and dare!

*Yashima in Winter*

LIKE a long roof, they say, and well they say,  
 This stage of warrior-ghosts surmounts the plain.  
 God-built it stands in winter's windy day,  
 With green and silver armed; our slow steps gain  
 The upper hill, now to the shrine we come  
 With its huge pinetrees helmed, and torched with blossoming  
 plum.

Here chivalry's artists and old poets greet  
 The pilgrim soul with statue, symbol, rune;  
 And here too is the cheerful village street;  
 Now, watched from high blue space by a phantom moon,  
 We lean at the belvedere in wonder new  
 Before the sudden sunlit maze of waters blue,

Wrinkled with unheard waves, by clouds in flight  
 Deep-purple-flecked: O Time! beyond the blue  
 And violet mystery, what extent and might  
 Of nature's crests and crownings! Is this view  
 In time and space? We ponder; while the crow  
 Wheels in the abyss above, his wings light-touched with snow.

*Those Who First Encouraged Us*

SWEET sing the verse, while this we sing:  
 The lovely frankness long ago  
 From eyes of black or eyes of blue,  
 The noble dreams of you and you,  
 Compassionate; you might not know,  
 Today, that you inspired us so.  
 Sweet be my verse while you I sing!

May I not fail, though old I grow,  
 In grace toward youth and honouring  
 And thanks for that which gentleness  
 And grace continue to impress:  
 Be yours the music, yours the spring  
 Which tune and colour everything;  
 This be my blessing, fare you so!

# A DECADE IN RETROSPECT

2

JACQUETTA HAWKES

**W**HEN I try to recall the last ten years, what I did in them and what they have done to me, I am haunted by Yeats' lines

Bring the balloon of the mind  
That bellies and drags in the wind  
Into its narrow shed

for I am grappling with a floating mass of thoughts and experiences and do not know how best to confine them.

I must avoid either making the retrospect too personal, a trivial autobiography, or too general, an undistinguished commentary on world affairs. Yet how difficult it is to judge how far the changes in value and outlook which I have known during the decade were brought about by happenings in my own life, how far by the influence of external events. Perhaps, however, it is a mistake to try to make this distinction, for it would require superhuman understanding to be confident that even the apparently most intimate histories may not in fact have been affected by unseen social currents. If the contributors to this series are being used as experimental subjects, it is hardly for us to decide what is, or is not, relevant. We must honestly expose our changing fortunes with our changing opinions in the hope that they may reveal the light breezes of social change as well as its prevailing winds.

I find it impossible to think of my life in the past ten years without going back a little further. Although I am an historian of a kind, my sense of chronology is weak; I am often quite unable to say when or even in what order momentous events took place. But there is one date I do not forget—1938. Undoubtedly the public event which has had the greatest impact on

my private life is Munich. Though old enough to know worse, I had lived through the years leading up to the catastrophe with an untempered idealism. I was giving much of my time to obscure forms of archaeological research, while apart from these special studies most of the books I read were books *about* something—many bore yellow jackets and were concerned with malnutrition, socialism, fascism, slum clearance, or the Spanish war. My whole life, indeed, was mainly concerned with facts, and I had a deep faith in reason and the ability of the intellect to set the world right. Reading the *New Statesman* every week, I did not doubt that I knew how it should be done. In short, being utterly remote from the source of any new movement, I was more or less a liberal rationalist, but with an anomalous dislike of the scientific attitude of mind, acquired during my youth at Cambridge.

As the years went by I shared bitterly in the general sense of approaching doom. My anger reached a high mark with the Spanish civil war, which I saw as a clear-cut issue of right against wrong; had I not been pregnant at the time I should probably have taken some part in it. As it was I read more and more newspapers and factual books, did odd jobs for the local Labour Party, and rode on a full tide of suppressed emotion towards the autumn of 1938. Munich week comes back to me, as do most of my memories, as a series of *tableaux*. There is one set in a London railway station with our year-old son being seen off to the country; another in a Town Hall where an old lady is having hysterics as I try to fit her with a gas mask. Then, evidently a night scene, men stripped to the waist digging shelter trenches by the light of flares. The picture which remains sharpest and most evocative shows me climbing towards the top of Primrose Hill and catching sight of a single and most slender anti-aircraft gun showing black against the night sky. Under its protection I went to bed with our past blunders forgotten, present righteousness certain, and an emotional charge fit to launch a thunderbolt.

I was one of those for whom "peace with honour" felt like a hurling of the spirit from a sky-scraper to the pavement.

Afterwards, with all the crudity of reaction, I decided I must either turn to communism or stop thinking about politics, and as extremism is impossible to me, the choice was hardly a real one. Since that time, although I have had many contacts with public affairs, I have never again been emotionally involved in political events.



The next year the actual outbreak of war left me unmoved. I was excavating in Ireland in the midsummer of 1939, and when I found the Director of the National Museum in Dublin, at that time a well-known Nazi, preparing to take his whole family and an astonishing amount of luggage for a holiday in the Tyrol, I knew war could not be far off. But I was indifferent. I remember how on the morning of September 3rd, after listening to Chamberlain's broadcast, I looked into the garden and saw my husband stretched in a deck chair reading Wells' latest book, *The Fate of Homo Sapiens*. I was amused—then merely frightened when almost at once the first false air-raid alarm was sounded. However much the head may argue, particular and strong emotions can only be experienced once.

I entered the war discredibly: intellectually, emotionally and spiritually dulled. No longer with any wish to do or die, I left London with my child; when invasion threatened we were among those who fled for safety to the West Country. There, in spite of the isolation and small scale of my life, I could not fail to be roused by the national revival of that summer. When, leaning from a window one September night, I heard the bells of church after church take up the invasion alarm and toss it further across the hills and vales of Dorset, I was flooded with feeling for the immense antiquity of our land, for a tradition which it would be hard for any invader to destroy. It seemed as though all the men and women who had won these farms from the forest, as well as the builders of the Gothic church towers, generations of coast-guards, levies waiting for the Armada, for Bony, were up and about again.

It was at this time that I ran head-on into a violent emotional experience which had a revolutionary effect on my personality. Already I feel a sweet nostalgia for the bewilderment and exhilaration of those days; the sudden quickening and deepening of my apprehension of poetry and painting, the radiance which suffused the lovely countryside in which I was living. Every tree, every leaf was singing the praise of my new god. A barrier had been broken, and with an abruptness that must be rather unusual I found myself tasting the ancient joys and sorrows of the emotional and imaginative life. It was absurd, at thirty I was "changed"—and lastingly so.

I have been digging into my personal history, but such an



upheaval in the psyche must be recorded, as it inevitably helped to change my vision and valuation of the external world. Indeed the experience itself can equally well be accepted as one bubble in the vast social ferment of war, a ferment which whatever its dangers can always be relied upon to release a surge of new energy.

Some of my own energy I gave to the only work I was in a position to do. I started a book on the early history of Britain. I put into it all the imagination I could command, but so incoherent were my ideas that unknowingly I adopted the fundamental materialism which many of us had absorbed from the brilliant researches and publications of Gordon Childe. Archaeology, with its dependence on physical remains for evidence, has a natural though superficial tendency towards the materialist interpretation of history. Once roused to the danger, it is a tendency which many of us are doing our best to counteract.

Soon my new zest found another outlet. After some activities during the *blitz*, whose craziness I can now scarcely credit, I found myself a temporary civil servant in the newly-established Post-War Reconstruction Secretariat under Mr. Arthur Greenwood. I was in it from the first day, coming straight from the vegetable garden to the highest altitudes of the Civil Service—for although my own status was modest, we dealt almost exclusively with Permanent Secretaries. There I learnt at once the hardened civil servant's scorn of Ministers and fear of the Treasury.

It was an exciting time; the fresh work and friends, the stimulus of air-raids, even the glistening, half-deserted streets of London all contributed. Certainly I have never loved London so much as I did then, when from sheer exuberance I used to run along a bomb-broken Whitehall on my way from Parliament Square to lunch at the National Gallery.

I rarely thought about the war or the political future. I now find it hard to recall even the chief events of the war and should make a lamentable display if examined on them. It was consistent with this that I did not feel the slightest resentment against the Germans for their raids on flying weapons, a fact for which I was thankful when our own dreadful retaliation began. It seemed a truth beyond question by conscious thought that we were all caught up in a universe of war where a division of guilt was as meaningless as it would be between the two personalities of a schizophrenic.

As it happens, the first of our great retaliatory raids has left the strongest of my war impressions. One evening when I was at Cambridge visiting my small son I went into the garden and stood looking across the adjacent meadow. It was warm, and a deep bank of wild parsley growing against the fence loaded the air with its heavy summer scent. To the west the sky was a glowing orange like those luridly romantic desert scenes with their silhouettes of camels. I felt a soft pulsation in the evening stillness and then the bombers came into sight. At first they seemed to spring from the western horizon like a huge plant, a deadly nightshade, putting up branches and leaves, intensely black against the glowing band of sunset. Soon their dark crosses were sown all over the sky, passing eastward with their relentlessly steady beat. The next day we heard of the attack on Cologne.

At my office I was occupied with the various projects of the Secretariat, of which the most interesting and significant was the preparatory work for the Beveridge Report. If a hack phrase is wanted it would be easy to say that all these post-war activities were purely escapist—a kind of beneficial play. This I admit, but do not find the admission shameful.

At least I had the grace after about two years to accept the Reconstruction Secretariat as the enjoyable bad joke which the government had always intended it to be, and to arrange for a transfer to the Ministry of Education. There I was able to watch Civil Service administration at a humbler level, and in many ways found it a more satisfactory spectacle than chamois hunting on the summits. Nevertheless, before I left the Service I came to the conclusion that the greater an official's reputation for "soundness" the more irresponsible he was likely to be. Only "sound" men got the very top positions, and they were distinguished by a careful preoccupation with correct procedure, with machinery. I could imagine them as men in charge of a factory so fascinated by subtle manipulations, oiling, and the occasional throwing of spanners that they would not notice if instead of the intended safety-pins the plant was in fact producing tin-tacks—and those long after all carpets had been laid.

However, they were many of them intelligent, charming, tolerant, as civil servants so often are, and very willing to allow room for enthusiasm and other idiosyncrasy. I became the official responsible for "Visual Education" and seized the best oppor-

tunity I have ever enjoyed to implement my own ideas at public expense. Although at the Ministry "Visual Education" was always sharply distinguished from "Art," I believed that films, fine photographs, models, could be used to train the eyes in judgment and appreciation, while at the same time suggesting an historical perspective. I therefore contrived to launch a series of films and other productions which together might convey some notion of the history of our civilization. All of them contained material delightful to look at for its own sake. Benjamin Britten's *Instruments of the Orchestra* was an early success, other subjects are only now being finished. They have taken longer than they should to make and have cost too much, but I still think them good and a contribution to education which should have been further developed.

If this experience added anything to my general opinions, it was a firmer conviction that individuals and groups of individuals united by friendship or personal loyalty are the only source of creative work. Three or four of us working with the energy of our own ideas did relatively far more than ever seems likely to be achieved by the huge machine of committees, panels and national agencies which has lumbered into our place.

As the result of a Treasury raid, I was hastily transferred from Visual Education to act as secretary to the British National Commission for Unesco. It was considered an exceptionally attractive post—travel, "interesting contacts," high ideals! Not many years before I should probably have taken it with incredulous delight, but now, so greatly had my ideas changed, I did not want it at all. Here was a big, artificially created organization, dangerously swollen with good intentions and speaking the windiest of languages. I knew that experiments in international association were a necessary part of the age, I was eager to see them made—but not by me.

However, I was transferred, and certainly in retrospect I do not regret it. Not only did I appreciate journeys to Mexico and to Prague in very good company, and freedom to visit Paris, but I am glad to have experienced the difficulties of international organization at first hand, and to have seen for myself how governments join such agencies as Unesco with no intention of furthering their aims.

As my own contribution, I tried to keep our National Com-

mission as approachable and unofficial as possible, hoping that if we could achieve little ourselves we might be able to support outside initiative. In this, however, we were largely disappointed, and we were handicapped by having no budget of our own. When I looked round our committee tables ringed with the faces of eminent men and women many of whom still had glimmerings of life left in them, I sometimes felt oppressed by the burden of wasted hours. More and more of our own time was spent in fighting the Ministry, for the lower ranks of the hierarchy, with their immense power for annoyance and delay, were hostile to our informal organization and our supposed privileges. Until then, I had never thought it possible in real life for an executive officer to rebuke a clerk for sitting at a table with a drawer in it when his rank entitled him to no more than four legs and a top.

During the whole of my time in the Civil Service I had continued to write, at first mostly on archaeological subjects, but gradually extending my range. I had also been writing poetry which had become fair enough for acceptance by a reputable publisher. I was eager to develop my plans for two books. In a world so full of competent officials and tireless committee men it seemed to me that anyone with the smallest gift of originality should try to make use of it. For some months I struggled against an unholy alliance between loyalty and mercenary greed (my tastes had grown more expensive), but at last both were cowed and I resigned from the Service.

So now at the end of my ten years I am neither scholar nor scientist, poet nor philosopher, civil servant nor journalist. I hesitate even to call myself author. Yet perhaps when most people are so securely fixed on such isolated stools we who stray between them have our own value. Mercury was not despised among the gods. We know committees will never put our names forward for honour or preferment, but we enjoy ourselves and do not greatly care.

In writing autobiographically I have tried at the same time to suggest changes in outlook, and, if I am a good experimental subject, I shall have revealed more unconsciously than by these deliberate revelations. The most fundamental change which I can detect in myself has been to promote the imagination above the intellect and to recognize more sincerely the importance of the emotional and intuitive life. I have not wavered in my loyalty to

reason, I have merely come to see, what many people see without difficulty, that reason is not concerned with intellect alone but must take account of these greater imponderables. What a cold and meagre thing it would be if it did not.

With this change has gone a revulsion against the narrow and emasculated forms of twentieth-century materialism. In particular I dislike those positivist philosophers who are willing to sit on a peak, however sharp and uncomfortable for their own behinds, in order to sneer at the crowds below who are still wandering in the long grass, who have still failed to explain away their own existence. In my subject this doctrine takes a form which seems too trivial to be dangerous. Order is imposed on history by measuring human success in terms of the number of bodies, "progress" in terms of the development of technical skill.

As a citizen I have not been greatly disappointed by our first term of socialism for I did not enter upon it with very high hopes. On the other hand, as my testament will have made clear, I am among those who are prone to disappointment precisely because they are not hostile. State socialism is opposed to many of my present beliefs, yet because I am convinced that the type of government which alone could supplant it would at heart be careless of ordinary people I have not changed my allegiance. Like everyone else I see more sharply than I did the dangers of excessive and distant control and the dreariness of standardization. Because I am older, I now see what a fragile inheritance civilization is—so much more easily destroyed than re-created.

My most precise complaint against the Labour Government is for its lack of imagination—in fact, for its dull materialism. In 1945 we were ready to think of something else beside our purses; now I doubt whether we are. Between the Standard of Living and the Dollar Gap the fabric of life wears thin.

I still feel a naïve surprise that this great modern fetish, the Standard of Living, finds no place for beauty in surroundings, for quiet, for enjoyable work, for membership of a community. As for my own vision of Utopia, these hints are all that I can give. One other change has happened to me during the last ten years. Although I have not given up the *New Statesman*, I no longer understand anything, or feel any certainty about what ought to be done.



# EARLY MAN AND THE THRESHOLD OF RELIGION<sup>1</sup>

By

DOROTHY A. E. GARROD

THE religion of the hunting peoples of the Old Stone Age is a subject which at one time and another has inspired interest in circles much wider than that of the prehistoric archaeologist. The exploration of so remote a past appeals naturally to the imagination, while the scarcity of concrete evidence leaves a remarkably free field for speculation. It is my object in this article to consider the theories put forward from time to time, but first it is necessary to examine what evidence we do indeed possess of the religious life of Palaeolithic man. It is a commonplace that the imperishable elements in the material culture of prehistoric peoples represent only a fraction of the things which they made and used, and that in the majority of cases practically everything that really matters has escaped us for ever. If this is true of tools and weapons, we may feel inclined to despair of obtaining even a glimpse of anything more intangible. Fortunately there are notable exceptions. Disposal of the dead, for instance, is an obvious clue to a man's attitude to the Unseen, and we find that even the primitive Neanderthaler laid his dead aside with care, and with dispositions showing belief in an after-life in which they still needed weapons and tools and food. The more elaborate burials of the Upper Palaeolithic, in which the bodies wear their choicest adornments of shells and beads, tell the same story, with added details. The skeletons are often embedded in red ochre, symbol of vital energy, and sometimes the limbs have been closely bound, as,

<sup>1</sup> This article contains the substance of the first Marett lecture, delivered at Oxford in May 1947.

though to keep a ghost from walking. When all is said, however, these early graves do not prove much more than a belief in some kind of after-life whose needs, apparently, were much the same as those of life on earth. For intimations of anything more complex or more profound we must look elsewhere, to the art of Palaeolithic man, for into this he carved and engraved and painted many clues to the workings of his mind.

Here the evidence is more limited in time and space, because if Neanderthal man and his predecessors did by any chance make works of art, they made them in a material which has perished; even Upper Palaeolithic man began to use bone and antler and stone for his carvings and engravings only in those regions (roughly north of latitude  $42^{\circ}$ ) where wood became scarce in the rigours of the Würmian glaciation. Even more limited in distribution, for reasons which we do not know, are the paintings and engravings on cave walls, which for our purpose are the most informative of all. If we leave on one side the very specialized hunting scenes painted on open rock-shelters in Eastern Spain, such paintings and engravings are—with a few rare exceptions in Central and Southern Spain—confined within an area whose boundaries are roughly the Loire, the Rhône, the Pyrenees with their westward extension the Cantabrian Mountains, and the Atlantic. Their nature is by now so well known that I need not describe it in detail. Briefly, the art of the caverns consists of a series of animal figures, depicted usually singly, though sometimes in pairs or in groups, and painted or engraved often with great skill and beauty. Much more rarely, grotesque human forms appear among the animals, but with very few exceptions these are merely engraved, not painted, and are often difficult to decipher.<sup>1</sup> In addition there are prints of human hands, outlined in red or black, which are among the very earliest manifestations of this art, and a multitude of signs, difficult to interpret, which are classified by French prehistorians as claviform, naviform, tectiform, scutiform—in other words as symbols of clubs, boats, huts or shields. Most of these figures were made in darkness lit only by a small stone lamp, and whatever rites were performed in their presence were illuminated by the same feeble flame.

<sup>1</sup> Recent discoveries to the east of Poitiers, however, suggest the existence of a northern province in Palaeolithic art in which human beings are depicted in naturalistic style. See *Illustrated London News*, July 16, 1949.



Not only are they often far from the cave-mouth, but the passage may be difficult or even dangerous. One has the impression that whenever the formation of the cave made it possible, full advantage was taken of all natural obstacles to make the journey arduous and even terrifying.

The first discovery of cave-paintings, that of Altamira in 1879, was met with disbelief, but when this had been overcome by further discoveries, people's minds began to turn to the problem of their meaning. Already in 1899 Salomon Reinach<sup>1</sup> tentatively suggested that they bore witness to some form of totemism. Later he developed this idea,<sup>2</sup> stressing the theory of "magic constraint," or sympathetic magic, and drawing a comparison with the intichiuma ceremonies of Central Australia, by which the members of particular groups, who are themselves forbidden to eat their totemic animal or plant, seek to secure its multiplication for the benefit of the tribe as a whole.

Carthailac and Breuil, in their great publication of Altamira in 1906,<sup>3</sup> made the first detailed comparison between the art of cave man and that of modern savages, but although a magico-religious explanation was clearly accepted, they were cautious in drawing conclusions outside the field of technology. The suggestion was made, however, that the grotesque human figures, which at Altamira are so lightly engraved as to be almost invisible, were dancers wearing animal masks, an idea which has been confirmed by later discoveries. In the second edition of Altamira,<sup>4</sup> published in 1935, Breuil and Obermaier are more explicit. "These pictures," they say, "certainly owe their existence to the magico-religious idea, especially to the custom of hunting-magic, as it is still practised to-day among living primitive peoples." They go on to suggest that certain caves, and certain places in those caves where there is a palimpsest of pictures of different ages, were specially sacred, and conclude that there may here be a cult of particular animals, possibly totemic.

Meanwhile the magico-religious explanation was not winning complete acceptance. In his great work *Les Hommes Fossiles*, Marcellin Boule<sup>5</sup> upheld the theory of art for art's sake, though he admitted that Palaeolithic man had "le sens du mystère,"

<sup>1</sup> *Revue Archéologique*. 1899.

<sup>2</sup> *Cultes, Mythes et Religions*. Vol. I. 1904.

<sup>3</sup> *La Caverne d'Altamira*. 1906.

<sup>4</sup> *The Cave of Altamira*. 1935.

<sup>5</sup> *Les Hommes Fossiles*. First edition. 1921.

since the caves appeared to have played the part of sanctuaries, and also "des préoccupations religieuses," since he buried his dead with special rites. In a book on art and religion published as a companion volume to that of Boule, G. H. Luquet<sup>1</sup> maintained a similar theory. "Even though art," he says, "may later have been deflected to magical, and in consequence utilitarian ends, it was in the beginning purely disinterested, and had no other object than beauty."

Luquet's approach is primarily that of the historian of art, and his attitude to the philosophical problem is very cautious. His book is, however, considered the standard work on the subject, and has eclipsed a study of the religion of early man, published five years before by Professor Mainage<sup>2</sup> of the Institut Catholique in Paris, which is the first attempt to deal with the matter methodically and in detail.

Mainage devotes the main part of his book to cave art, which he examines with close attention to ethnographic parallels. Like most observers, he is impressed with the difficulty of access to many of the paintings, and the air of mystery "voulu et recherché" which surrounds them, and draws the first general conclusion that quaternary art is dominated by religious ideas, beliefs and preoccupations. He then examines the specific case for totemism, but concludes that the evidence is against it, mainly, he claims, because he finds no evidence for local specializations in a particular animal, nor of local taboos, either on the cave-walls or in contemporary food remains. His final conclusion is that these paintings do, nevertheless, bear witness to a cult of the animals on the which the very existence of a hunting-people depends, and who are envisaged as superior beings, stronger, swifter, more cunning than men. He gives many instances, well known to anthropologists, of the prayers and apologies by which hunters seek to reconcile to their death the animals whom they venerate and are forced to kill. Such practices he classifies as essentially religious, inspired by adoration, fear and hope, but he recognizes that in Palaeolithic art they go side by side with others which are more properly described as magic, since they imply that man seeks to exercise compulsion over supernatural forces—Reinach's "magic constraint." Such are the bisons, horses or

<sup>1</sup> *L'Art et la Religion des Hommes Fossiles*. 1926.

<sup>2</sup> *Les Religions de la Préhistoire: l'Age Paléolithique*. 1921.

reindeer bearing spear-heads or arrow-heads on their flanks, the painted or modelled couples who are to assure the fertility of the herds, and the animal carvings on bone spear-throwers.

So far Mainage is on firm ground. One must admit that by going further, and seeking to prove from archaeological evidence that Palaeolithic man was a monotheist, he is asking of that evidence more than it can give, and it is possibly for this reason that his book has not received the recognition which in fact it deserves.

Mainage, as we have seen, distinguishes sharply between religion and magic, between the attitude of supplication and the attitude of compulsion in regard to the supernatural, but he recognizes that in the mind of the savage the distinction is not so clear-cut. Witness his final conclusion: "Monotheism, cult of animal spirits, magic, burial rites, all are inextricably interwoven. Useless to attempt to bring within the unity of a coherent system all these disparate elements. The primitive mind does not feel the need of a synthesis. More emotional than our own, because more ignorant, it is more readily lost in a labyrinth of inconsistencies."

The religion of early man is treated by Christopher Dawson in *The Age of the Gods*,<sup>1</sup> which appeared twelve years after Mainage's book. Like Mainage, Dawson puts aside totemism as improbable, but notes that the custom of placating beasts that have been killed, or of seeking to secure the favour of animal spirits before hunting, are found especially among the northern peoples of the circumpolar area, whose culture is in many ways comparable with that of the Upper Palaeolithic peoples of Europe. On the whole, however, he prefers to explain the art of the caves by a belief in animal Guardian Spirits similar to that found among certain North American Indians, who believed that every individual might possess such a guardian, received through a dream or revelation in times of religious exaltation. This tutelary animal genius would sometimes be painted on a rock, or its symbol daubed on bows and arrows. Dawson notes that American anthropologists on the whole consider that totemism was more probably derived from the conception of Animal Guardians than the other way about, and he suggests that the existence of a similar cycle of ideas in the Upper Palaeolithic would afford a

<sup>1</sup> *The Age of the Gods*. 1933.

satisfactory explanation of European cave-paintings. He concludes: "The hunter lives always in a state of utter dependence on Nature, such as we cannot conceive. Nature is always and everywhere his mistress and his mother, and he is a parasite living on her bounty through her elder and wiser and stronger children the beasts. Hence the religion of the primitive hunter is characterized by universality and vagueness. He does not single out particular powers of Nature to be divinized and worshipped . . . nor is he strictly speaking an animist, who looks on every manifestation of Nature as the work of individual personal spirits. He is rather a kind of primitive pantheist . . . who sees everywhere behind the outward appearance of things a vague, undifferentiated spiritual power, which shows itself alike in beast and plant, in storm and thunder, in rock and tree, in the magic of the shaman and in the spirits of the dead. This is the type of religion which Dr. Marett first described as pre-animistic, and to which M. Durkheim and his school have given the name of the Religion of *Mana*."

This leads us finally to Marett's own view of the religion of early man, which for him was one of many aspects of that study of primitive religion which was his constant preoccupation. His interest is first clearly shown in the article "In a Prehistoric Sanctuary" which appeared in the *Hibbert Journal* for 1910, and was afterwards incorporated in *The Threshold of Religion*. From that time references to prehistoric custom are frequent in his writings and lectures. His approach is, of course, deeply coloured by his own theory, and although the terms *Mana* and pre-animism have long passed into the current vocabulary of anthropologists, I venture to recall at this point his own definitions. "It would appear that the root-idea is that of power—a power manifested in sheer luck, no doubt, as well as in cunning, yet on the whole tending to be conceived as psychic energy, almost in fact as what we should call will-power. Further, though it may be that every being possesses its modicum of mana, the tendency is for the word to express extraordinary power, in short a wonder-working."<sup>1</sup> And some pages later: "Science, then, may adopt *Mana* as a general category to designate the positive aspect of the supernatural, or sacred, or whatever we are to call that order of miraculous happenings

<sup>1</sup> *The Threshold of Religion*, p. 86.

which, for the concrete experience, if not usually for the abstract thought of the savage, is marked off perceptibly from the order of ordinary happenings. *Tabu* on the other hand may serve to designate its negative aspect. That is to say, negatively, the supernatural is *tabu*, not to be lightly approached, because, positively, it is *mana*, instinct with a power above the ordinary."<sup>1</sup>

Marett's first visit to the cave of Niaux is vividly described in the article already cited<sup>2</sup>; the journey of approach through the long, dark galleries; the painted bisons and horses of the *Salon Noir*, many with spear-heads or clubs painted on their sides; the trout drawn in the clay of the cave-floor; the naked human footprint under an overhanging ledge of rock. As he comes back to the light of day he asks the question: "In what sense, if any, is this painted cave a sanctuary?" The answer is deferred until he has described Gargas, with its stencilled hand-prints, Les Combarelles and Font-de-Gaume, with engravings and paintings set, as at Niaux, in dark galleries, some difficult of access. He then concludes: "These must have been sanctuaries, if only because no one would dream of hedging round a mere picture-gallery with such trying turnstiles," and adds: "Existing savages . . . are so much alike in their fundamental ways of action and thought all the world over, that it is not extravagant to conclude that the inhabitants of prehistoric Europe had likewise the type of mind that to-day seems to go regularly and inevitably with a particular stage of social development. On such a working hypothesis, those ceremonies . . . whereby savages by magico-religious means, including the use of sacred designs, endeavour to secure for themselves good hunting and a plentiful supply of game animals, take us by analogy straight back to the times of prehistoric artistry." Of the Gargas handprints, which convey such a sense of mystery to the modern observer, he notes that it is provoking that the Australians, who have exactly the same practice, either will not or cannot give any motive for it. He suggests that primitive man, by contact with a holy spot, was here recording some charm or vow making for his personal betterment.

Some of these reflections may seem almost commonplace today, but in 1910 the subject was still in its infancy, and many

<sup>1</sup> *The Threshold of Religion*, p. 99.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 203-220.



of the great discoveries were yet to be made, such as the clay figures of bison in the Tuc d'Audoubert, and of bear and lion at Montespan, and the painting of a masked sorcerer in the cave of Les Trois Frères. Many years later Marett writes,<sup>1</sup> "The notion of multiplication is suggested by the coupled bisons, male and female, of the cave-sanctuary of Tuc d'Audoubert. . . . The clay images of Montespan, where a real spear has repeatedly been thrust into the cave-bear's heart, openly proclaim a lust for slaughter, hardly compatible, one would suppose, with any desire to secure the goodwill of the victim. After all, there were killers in plenty among the beasts of those days, and . . . it may have been felt that the proper time to come to terms with their *mana* was after they had been duly dispatched." Near the end of his life Marett refers again to the Tuc d'Audoubert. "The two famous bisons, male conjoined with female, are modelled with the greatest fidelity to nature, and the accompanying rites probably involved, not a mimic slaying, but an invocation to be fruitful and multiply. The abundant prints in the neighbourhood of naked feet with heels deeply impressed show how, after the fashion of the modern savage, these early folk danced out their litanies, and doubtless could do so with greater expressiveness than they could think or speak them out."<sup>2</sup> Of Les Trois Frères he writes, "It is not unlikely that the impressive sorcerer . . . with his reindeer mask, may have styled himself a reindeer, and that there were likewise human cave-bears or bisons, whose business it was to keep in mystic touch with their animal counterparts and incite them to do their duty by mankind. On the other hand, hunting-rites intended to control or conciliate the game are not necessarily totemistic, but form a wider class within which falls the particular variety involving the totemite's belief that his totem is of one nature with himself, and must therefore be in sympathy with his wishes and needs."<sup>3</sup> He concludes that however much we may suspect it, there is not enough evidence to bring home definite totemism to Palaeolithic man.

It is now more than half a century since material began to accumulate for a study of the religion of Palaeolithic man, and we may ask what clear results emerge from the various lines of

<sup>1</sup> *Sacraments of Simple Folk*. 1933. p. 38.

<sup>2</sup> *Head, Heart and Hands in Human Evolution*. 1935. p. 246.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 223.

approach which I have summarized. We must admit at once that the door of the Past has not been flung open; at best we have a series of glimpses through the key-hole. The theories which have been applied from time to time are like keys tried out when the real one is lost; some of them go nearly all the way round, but not one can slip right through the wards. We know that early man believed in some kind of survival after death. We have the conviction that his painted caves are sanctuaries of a kind, in which we have a vision of masked men dancing in the presence of animal figures, but we can only guess at the relationship which the dancers conceived to exist between themselves and the beasts on the wall. Some of the animals indeed bear on their sides arrows and spears, the spiritual missiles of what Marett calls the projective act, by which man kills in image the creatures on whose death his life depends; others seem to invoke the continued fruitfulness of the beasts, in order that their offspring may in turn fall victim to the same missile; but many others, the great majority, give no direct clue to the artist's motive. We are left with a general impression of a cult in which animals, portrayed as stronger and more beautiful than men, played the leading part. Whether Guardian Spirits or totems, they are powerful and full of *Mana*.

Recent discoveries, I think, have something to add to this, and I am convinced that a fresh study of the old material may still yield surprises. It is not my purpose here to attempt any ambitious new theory of Palaeolithic religion, but simply to present some observations on the evidence, old and new, in the hope that these disconnected pieces of an intricate puzzle may one day find their place in a more complete picture.

The first point to be considered is the ratio of animals depicted on cave-walls at any stage to those killed and eaten at the same stage by the hunters of the region. There is a discrepancy here which was early noted by Breuil. In the first Altamira volume he cites a number of cases, but refrains from attempting any explanation. In a recent description of the cave of Lascaux<sup>1</sup> (discovered during the war) he deals again with this question, ascribing the comparative rarity in cave art of the reindeer, as compared with the abundance of their bones found in contemporary hearths, to the fact that they were easy to hunt, being

<sup>1</sup> *Una Altamira Francesa*. 1941. p. 380.



relatively slow-moving, and tending to follow the same tracks in their seasonal migrations. No special magic would be needed in dealing with them. This may be true, but considering the outstandingly important part played by the reindeer in the economy of the Upper Palaeolithic, and especially of the Magdalenian peoples, together with all the hazards and chances involved in hunting even a relatively plentiful animal, I wonder whether magic could so lightly be dispensed with. The Caribou Eskimo of Hudson's Bay, who like the Magdalenians live largely on the reindeer, are often brought to the edge of starvation in the spring, before the herds migrate north again. The punctual arrival of the reindeer each winter must have been an event anxiously awaited in the caves and shelters of the Dordogne and Pyrenees, and I think it remains surprising that so little trace is to be found of this in Palaeolithic art.

The comparative rarity of pictures of reindeer is not the only puzzle. Equally strange is the overwhelmingly high proportion of bisons depicted in the late Magdalenian polychrome paintings at a time when remains of bison are very scanty indeed in contemporary dwelling-places. This is to be seen in the Cantabric region at Castillo and at Altamira (where the polychrome bisons of the great painted ceiling are among the masterpieces of pre-historic art), and again in the Dordogne, where bisons are enormously in the majority in the polychromes of Font-de-Gaume, whereas their bones are rare indeed in the late Magdalenian hearths of La Madeleine and Laugerie Basse, near at hand.

This discrepancy between the animals painted and the animals hunted which is so striking in the late Magdalenian, is less marked in earlier stages. In the Dordogne, for example, the Middle Magdalenian engravings of Les Combarelles, in which horses predominate, are contemporary with hearths in which bones of horse are in the majority, and the same is true of the red deer in the Cantabric region at the same stage.

Another small fact may be significant. The placing of missiles on pictures of animals is, on the whole, a rather early feature. It is seen at Lascaux, where the latest paintings are believed to be early Magdalenian, and it is specially developed at Niaux, where there is probably nothing later than Middle Magdalenian. In both these cases the bison is among the animals transfixed. As

far as I know, however, there is no clear case of the magic projectile in connection with late Magdalenian polychromes.

What may we conclude from all this? Although we still have no clear proof, I would suggest tentatively that whereas in its earlier stages cave art in the main was closely connected with the needs of the hunt (although we cannot assert, even so, that this covers all possible cases), by the end of the Magdalenian there had arisen a veritable cult of the bison, accompanied by a virtual abstention from taking its life. Whether this took the form of a rudimentary totemism it is impossible to guess, but the relatively wide distribution of the paintings suggests that the bison was the guardian or kinsman of the tribe or nation, rather than of the individual.

Lascaux gives a single revealing glimpse of a special attitude towards the bison in which such a cult may possibly have had its roots. Sealed in by a fall of rock which has closed the main entrance, many of the paintings here are as brilliant as on the day they were made, and taken together with the multitude of engravings which accompany them they provide the most remarkable example yet known of the pre-Magdalenian and early Magdalenian stages of parietal art. The cave-walls are covered with pictures of deer, aurochs, horses and so on, together with a few bisons, one of whom is marked with seven spears. So far there is nothing very new, except from the technical point of view. All the familiar elements are here—the magic missile, symbolic coupling, females with young. But from the floor-level of a rocky apse a hole opens into a descending gallery. From the rim of this hole there is a vertical drop of twenty-five feet to a small chamber from which the gallery slopes downward to a point where further advance is blocked by fallen rocks. On one wall of this chamber there is a rather poor painting of a horse, on the other a truly amazing scene painted in black outline.<sup>1</sup> A man—childish in execution, and with a bird's head, but unmistakably a man—falls backward with outspread arms before the attack of a bison, who, with lowered head and an indescribable expression of rage, is just about to gore him. Through this beast's hindquarters is thrust a spear, passing from the root of the tail to the belly, and his entrails are gushing out in great loops. By the

<sup>1</sup> For a reproduction see *Lascaux: A Commentary*, by A. H. Brodrick. Lindsay Drummond, 1949.

man's feet is an object which may be a spear-thrower (we know that the Magdalenians possessed this arm), and below him, as it were in the forefront of the scene, is a vertical pole with a cross-bar at the base, topped by a conventionalized figure of a bird. Immediately to the left of these figures is a woolly rhinoceros, which at first sight appears to be walking away from the death-struggle, but which, in my own view, may well have nothing to do with the scene.

What is the meaning of this painting, unique in our experience of Palaeolithic art? Let us examine it more closely. The man, as we have seen, has the head of a bird, and beside him is a pole bearing the figure of a bird. Breuil<sup>1</sup> compares this with certain funerary posts of the Alaskan Eskimo, which are surmounted with a painted image of an animal identified with the deceased. I think we have here something like proof that there existed in Upper Palaeolithic times the belief in that special link between man and the animals which has already been postulated on more general grounds. But we still do not know whether this is totemism or some less precise idea. Here the comparison with the Eskimo may be pushed a little further, for if the idea of a Magdalenian descent for these people has now been abandoned, it remains likely that at some remote point of the past the ancestor of the Eskimo touched hands with the Palaeolithic statuette-makers of Siberia and the Ukraine, and through them with the painters of the Franco-Cantabrian caves. So that among the circumpolar peoples of today, whose habitat is in many ways like that of the Upper Palaeolithic tribes of Europe, we may hope to find faint memories of that stock of ideas which in general outline must have been common to all those prehistoric hunters. Now among the Eskimo totemism in the strict sense is unknown, but a belief in the kinship of men and the beasts is nevertheless widespread. It seems to be based on the idea that in early days all living beings had a dual existence, becoming at will either men or animals, and it is thought that many animals still possess this power. Some such rather vague conception, rather than an explicit totemism, may well lie behind the bird-man of Lascaux and his funerary post.

Taking now the scene as a whole, we may ask again, what does it mean? The sequence of events is clear. The bird-man,

<sup>1</sup> *Una Altamira Francesa*, p. 379.

perhaps lightly and profanely, has inflicted a mortal wound on a powerful and dreaded beast, who in his rage and pain turns to destroy his destroyer in the moment of his own death. Of all this, the Abbé Breuil takes a literal view, suggesting that it commemorates some fatal hunting accident, the victim of which perhaps lies buried at the foot of the panel.<sup>1</sup> In the presence of the painting itself such an explanation seems almost frivolous. The unique character of the scene, the indescribable concentration of anger and power in the wounded beast and the depersonalization of the human figure impose a deeper meaning. I suggest that this is some legendary ancestral combat, a mythical death-struggle which had a profound significance and importance for the artist, and that it embodies an attitude of fear and veneration towards the bison which later is to find a more serene and spiritual expression in the superbly beautiful figures of the painted ceiling of Altamira.

To close, I can find no words more fitting than those of Marett. He is speaking again of Niaux, which, although surpassed in variety and beauty by Lascaux and Altamira, remains the most deeply moving of all prehistoric sanctuaries.<sup>2</sup> "For man of the primitive pattern there are two worlds, a workaday and a sacred. Whenever he needs help in the one he resorts to the other. The threshold between the two is clearly marked. He crosses it always in a ceremonial way, with nice attention to the traditional details of behaviour; and his ceremonies enhance, as they certainly reflect, the mood in which he draws near to the unseen source of his spiritual comfort. It matters not at all whether we classify as magic or religion the practices that result, so long as we recognize that all genuine rites involve one and the same fundamental mood and attitude, a drawing near in awe. Thus, then, we must suppose it was at Niaux. The man who left his footmark there had drawn near in awe, whether it was spell or prayer which accompanied his painting. And perhaps the best proof of all is that the spirit of awe and mystery still broods in these dark galleries within a mountain, that are, to a modern mind, symbolical of nothing so much as the dim subliminal recesses of the human soul."

<sup>1</sup> Recent excavation at this spot has shown that there is in fact no burial.

<sup>2</sup> *The Threshold of Religion*, p. 220.

# EVIE HONE

By

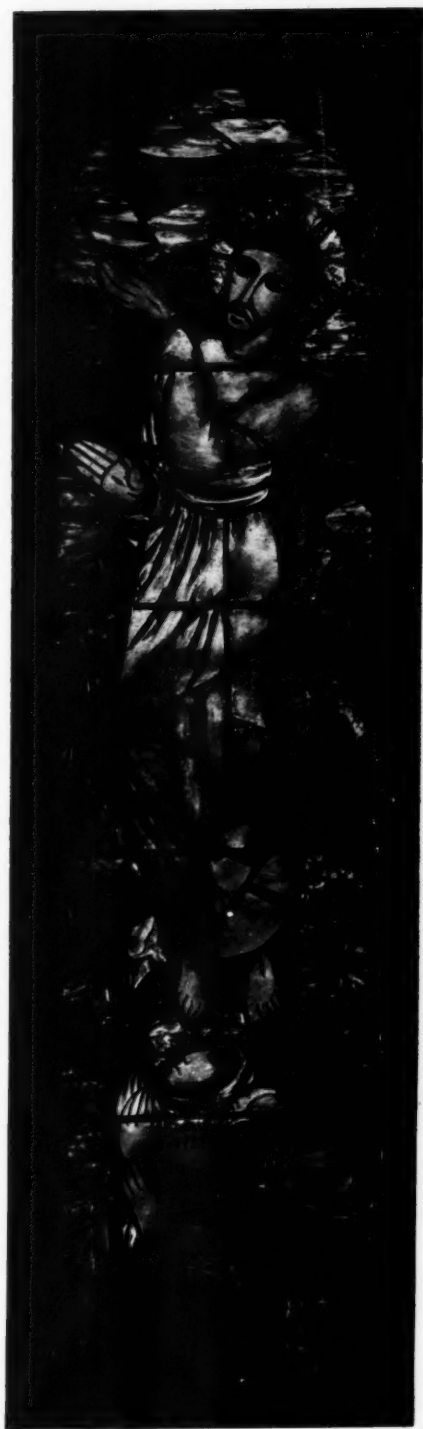
DEREK HILL

EVIE HONE was born in County Dublin in 1894. Her family, which besides her mother and father consisted of three sisters and herself, were members of the Protestant Anglo-Irish squirearchy and were largely attached to outdoor sports and in particular to riding. Although both the Nathaniel Hones and Horace Hone, the miniaturist, were distant relatives, and Joseph Hone, the biographer, is a first cousin, Evie Hone's own particular branch of the family does not appear to provide a clue if we are searching for a direct influence from which she could have inherited her prowess in the Arts. Of interest, rather than importance, is the fact that Galyon Hone, the King's glazier during the reign of Henry VI when the King's College Chapel windows in Cambridge were made, was an ancestor, and he was probably responsible for these masterpieces.

Evie Hone has no memory of her mother, who died when she was still a baby, and her upbringing was left to her father and to an aunt. At the age of eleven the most decisive event of Evie Hone's life occurred. She fell a victim to infantile paralysis, and by some mischance overheard the opinion expressed that she would never walk again. Although this blow would have stunned most sensitive children, Evie never once lost faith that she would be cured. Many years that must have been a nightmare followed: first, years of not being allowed to move at all, then years of treatment in London during which hopes were raised only to be dashed again. It was during these years of treatment in London that Evie began doing drawings and compositions that she took to the Byam Shaw School for correction. Continual operations, however, interrupted these lessons and it was not until 1917 that she was well enough to go to the Central School to study under Bernard Meninsky.

Previously, in 1914, shortly before the outbreak of war, Evie had been taken to Assisi. She considers this visit to have been



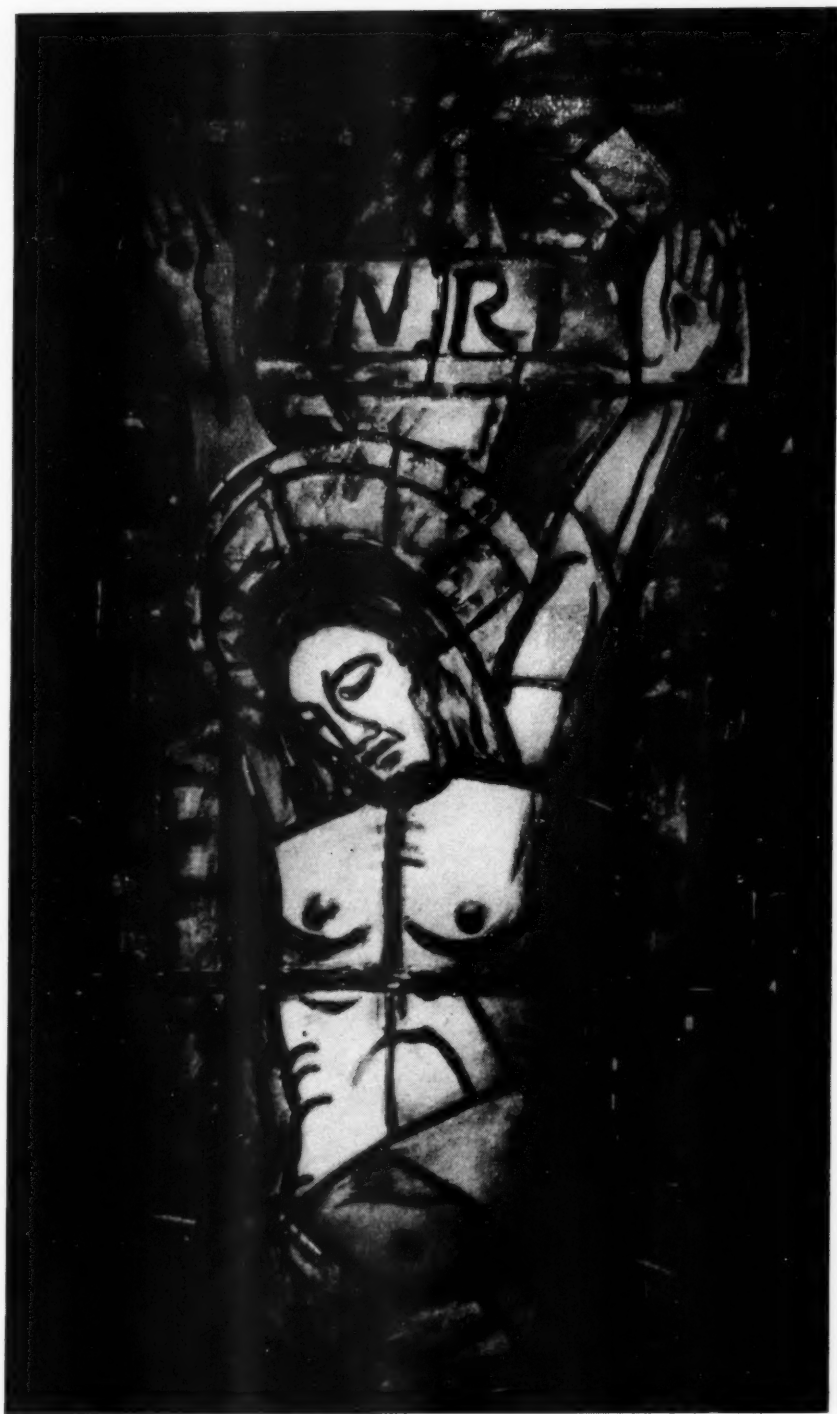


THE ASCENSION  
*at Kingscourt, Co. Cavan*



FACES OF FIVE WOMEN  
*Detail of lancet window at Kingscourt, Co. Cavan*





CRUCIFIXION  
*at Kingscourt, Co. Cavan (detail)*



OUR LADY OF MERCY WITH DOMINICAN SAINTS  
*at Dominican Convent, Belfast*

the determining impression of her youth. Certainly one is being continually reminded in her work of the calm and dignified serenity that one finds in the frescoes of Giotto and Cimabue, but many further influences came her way before this early impression showed itself in helping to form the style that we see in her latest glass to-day. Sickert, from whom she had six lessons at the Westminster School, seems to have left little mark upon her work, though it was at his classes that Evie met Maimie Jellett, an Irish abstract artist who was a close friend for many years.

In 1920 Meninsky advised Evie Hone to go to Paris to work under Andre Lhôte, who made his pupils study their antecedents as well as their contemporaries in art. He sent them, moreover, to work in the Louvre, and has proved by his masterful treatise on landscape that he believed a classical background to be essential to the modern idiom.

Evie's next teacher was Albert Gleizes, with whom she continued until 1930. With him she did abstract work in the Ardèche in the south of France as well as in Paris and his great love of Romanesque frescoes helped her to a deeper understanding of what she had already felt for herself when at Assisi. At this time Evie also visited Spain and bought works of the Spanish artists Juan Gris and Picasso when they were still largely unrepresented in England and almost unknown in Ireland. The essential proportion and harmonious balance that the cubists taught her were important, but Evie Hone regrets that an equal insistence on sound draughtsmanship was not instilled into her at the same time.

It was not until 1932, after a gap of three years in which little or no painting had been done, that Evie Hone first considered the possibility of using glass as a medium. Her first panels were entirely abstract and were praised by Roland Holst, the Dutch stained-glass artist, whom she visited in that year. From him, as well as from Wilhelmina Geddes, she learnt the rudiments of technique that her new medium demanded, and by 1934 she felt herself capable of beginning her first window.

The abstract tendency that had begun in Paris with Lhôte and Gleizes did not last very long and a more human element made itself felt in her work shortly after she had seen a Rouault exhibition in Paris, and again at Zwemmer's Gallery in London, in 1937. Books of coloured reproductions of the windows at Chartres and Le Mans also helped in the breaking-down of her

ascetic formalism and undoubtedly the change from easel painting to glass gave her a new and far more personal vision. This was further encouraged by the fact of being drawn nearer to the Church, and in 1939 Evie Hone accepted the Catholic faith.

So far the chief influences on Evie Hone have come from the Continent, but during the last war when inspiration from abroad was more difficult to come by, the early Irish and Celtic carvings at Cashel, Kilkenny and Kells excited her by their closeness to what she had already found stimulating in Rouault's work. These Irish stones seem to crystallise for her in some way the researches she had made amongst the Italian and French primitives and also at Chartres, and for the first time she could truly think of herself as being part of an Irish tradition.

It was the Irish Government that gave the first big commission when Evie Hone won the competition for a large window in the Irish Pavilion at the New York World Fair. This work brought many orders in Ireland itself. There are windows of hers, dating from this period, at Clongowes Wood College, Black Rock College, Collin's Barracks in Cork and Portobello Barracks in Dublin, but it was not until after her discovery of the Kilkenny carvings that she was given her largest order in Ireland for five windows in the Jesuit College Chapel of St. Stanislaus at Tullabeg. Father O'Sullivan was responsible for commissioning this work and his understanding of Evie Hone's aims and inspiration helped to make these windows her best work. Since Tullabeg the only windows of importance in Ireland done by her have been those of the Ascension at King's Court in County Cavan, but she has also done a series of oil paintings of the stations of the Cross for Kiltulla Church in County Galway.

So far no commissions for windows had come from England, but in 1948 the order came for a single window at Lanercost Priory in Cumberland and for south and east windows for the chapel in Ellington Park, near Leamington, belonging to Colonel Evelyn Shirley. The east window is in three panels depicting the Last Judgment, while the south window, not yet completed, will represent St. Nicholas. There are several small panels of glass, one at the Tate Gallery, but it is to be hoped that Evie Hone may soon be given an order that will do full justice to her remarkable ability and prove one of the most important works of ecclesiastical art done in this century.

# THE IMAGE AND THE WORD—II

By

CHRISTOPHER DEVLIN

IN the year before he encountered Scotus, Hopkins had written: Unless you refresh the mind from time to time you cannot remember or believe how deep the inscape in things is.

Probably the first encouragement that he received from Scotus was the reasoned suggestion that spiritual reality can be imbibed directly through the senses. Scotus allows for an intimate connection between innate memory and sensation; and this blend of Platonic idealism and Franciscan realism would have at once appealed to Hopkins.

According to Scotus, sensation responds to a real object outside the mind; yet, by the same token, it must be the expression of something which is already really present to the mind. This double presence of the object, striking independently on intellect and sense, is a difficulty which will be dealt with later. All that matters at the moment is that in the intellectual memory there is a kind of "innate knowledge" which provides the general content (though not the particular significance) of sensation.

The soul forms this image—I mean sensation—in itself and of itself.<sup>1</sup> But he distinguishes carefully between the acquired images which result from actual knowledge and the innate image which precedes all actual knowledge and helps to cause it. This is the distinction already mentioned between *habitus* (innate knowing) and *habilitas* (acquired knowing).<sup>2</sup>

Whether you follow Aristotle or Augustine (he says) you must

<sup>1</sup> *Format istam imaginem, hoc est sensationem, anima in se et de se.*

<sup>2</sup> *Illa species dicitur et est habitus, non tamen eiusdem rationis cum illo qui per actus acquiritur. Nam ex actibus non acquiritur nisi habilitas ad actus con-similes; numquam autem per illam habilitatem fit obiectum in intellectu praesens; per habitum autem qui est species fit praesens.*

postulate an original spiritual object which makes the mind start knowing, and gives it something to know. This holds, whether you say with Augustine that knowing is born of a marriage between God and the soul, or whether you say with Aristotle that the original passage from essential to accidental potency demands a first mover.

The activity of knowing (both for Aristotle and for Augustine) connotes the real habitual presence of the object in the intellectual memory; and this presence is the source of all subsequent knowledge. The object's presence is reflected in that passage from unconsciousness to pre-consciousness without which there could be no subsequent acts of knowledge. Hence, in the process of knowing, memory is both *species* (or "likeness" of the object) and *habitus* (or "tendency" towards the object). It is a *species*, or likeness, in that it reflects the working of nature and contains all nature virtually. It is a *habitus*, or tendency, in that it inhabits the mind permanently, disposing it to actual knowledge.<sup>1</sup>

The source from which the innate memory derives its "habitual or virtual knowledge" is its own nature inasmuch as its nature is the nature not only of all humankind but also of the forms that underlie humanity—the corporeal, the vegetative, and the sensitive forms. According to Scotus, in the passage from habitual to actual knowing, the rational form recapitulates these lower forms, investing them with its own rationality. This sounds as if the waking mind re-lived the evolutionary process from matter to man—an interesting theory in view of certain modern explanations of "poetic inspiration."

But it must be understood clearly that, for Scotus as for Hopkins, the notion that a spiritual substance can evolve *senz'altro* from blind matter is unpardonable nonsense. Behind all the forms of evolving nature is the most primitive of all. It is "transcend-

<sup>1</sup> The passage, which has been paraphrased in the English, is as follows:

Scientia quippe ibi tam apud Philosophum quam apud Augustinum accipitur pro ipsa praesentia habituali obiecti in memoria intellectiva, quae praesentia habitualis est virtualiter scientia, quia in obiecto sic praesente concipitur virtualiter tota scientia de tali obiecto.

Haec species est illa scientia quae reducit intellectum de potentia essentiali ad accidentalem, non autem illa quae proprie dicitur scientia quae estabilitas quaedam derelicta ab actibus. Nam ante istam, ad primum actum considerandi requiritur quod sit iam intellectus reductus de potentia essentiali ad accidentalem, alioquin non operaretur tunc magis quam prius. Unde in cognitione, species in qua relucet quidditas dicitur scientia, non tantum virtualiter quia totum continens, sed formaliter, potest dici habitus cognitivus, quia est qualitas mansiva in intellectu disponens ipsum ad actum.



dental nature," so called because it transcends every genus and category. Transcendental nature is the simple subject of creation: "something existing." It includes all however high or low in the scale of creation. Our original awareness of it is discernible by introspection:

We experience in ourselves a certain operation which is of "being" with a wider portent than any of its applications.<sup>1</sup>

It is this awareness of "something existing" which enables the metaphysician to form his concept of "being," and enables the contemplative to get in touch with God, the Infinite.

It is a paradox, though a fairly obvious one, that in order first to get in touch with our Creator we have to forsake that high level of distinct understanding which is man's distinctive glory, and go down below the lowest level which we share in common with the clod—and with the stars.

As Hopkins wrote, referring in the last line, presumably, to Darwinism:

Not out of His bliss  
Spirals the stress felt  
Nor first from heaven (and few know this)  
Swings the stroke dealt— . . .  
But it rides time like riding a river  
(And here the faithful waver, the faithless fable and miss).

As long as the postulate of common sense, "*nemo dat quod non habet*," is kept in mind, it may be interesting and even illuminating to connect Hopkins and Scotus by means of the modern paraphernalia of "the collective unconscious," "archetypal symbols," and the rest. But the fundamental scholastic connection between them is Scotus's insistence that the process of "being created" is the same as the substance of "created being" (*Essentia creaturae est sua dependentia ad Deum*), and Hopkins's identification of this notion with his "stress," as in the tired and tranquil fragment of 1885—

Thee, God, I come from, to thee go,  
All day long I like fountain flow . . .

But the development of this connection belongs rather to the Essay on Parmenides.

<sup>1</sup> *Experimur in nobis aliquam operationem quae est entis secundum rationem universaliorem.*

Meanwhile, this is what Scotus says about the evolution of "habitual knowing" into "actual knowing."

As a nature passes through various forms, in a certain order, to arrive at its perfection, so the knowing nature of man, to which the lower forms are ordained, will arrive at perfect knowing by the same process. Therefore the process of habitual or virtual knowing will be by way of generation or origin, from the more universal and less perfect to the more perfect and specific. And any one thought will virtually contain the whole process.<sup>1</sup>

If we join this to a passage from the *De Anima* (Q. 1, n. 7), we have a rudimentary account of the connection between sensation and innate memory. If we could distend any act of perception by some sort of metaphysical slow-motion, we should find the same process that takes place in the awakening from habitual to actual knowing, namely, the ascent of consciousness, from the chemical or merely-bodily level through the vegetative and sensitive levels to intellectual insight.

Sensation begins as "touch" when a kind of radiation ("lumen") stimulates the nervous system—"those tiny branches of nerves which permeate the whole body like a net—as may be seen in the leaf of a tree."<sup>2</sup>

In passing from passive to active touch, consciousness passes from the merely bodily to the vegetative level: "touch makes the living being, and it is the root of the other senses, as the vegetative soul makes the body alive."<sup>3</sup> Taste and smell are refinements of touch which are proper to the sensitive form of animals but which in man have become largely atrophied. In man, the proper expressions of the rational form are hearing and sight: "visus et auditus sunt magis spirituales." And of these two: "sight (*visus*)

<sup>1</sup> This is a paraphrase of the following passage: Sicut formae diversae perfectiores idem perfectibile, ordine quodam natae sunt mediatius et immediatius informare illud et perficere; ita si eadem forma contineat virtualiter in se perfectionem illarum formarum ordinarum, quasi consimili ordine naturae perficiet illud perfectibile. Ergo sicut conceptus plures communiores et minus communus, habituales vel virtuales, nati sunt perficere intellectum via generationis vel originis, ita quod imperfectior semper erit prius; ita si unus conceptus virtualiter includit omnes istos, prius perficiet sua ratione conceptus prioris et universalioris quam secundum rationem conceptus particularis.

<sup>2</sup> Sunt aliqui ramusculi nervorum qui extenduntur per totum corpus ad modum retis, et hoc patet in folio arboris ad sensum.

<sup>3</sup> Tactus facit esse animal et est fundamentum aliorum sensuum, sicut anima vegetativa facit corpus animatum.

sums up all the other senses, as man sums up all the lower created forms. Man is, as it were, every creature, because of his natural kinship with them all."<sup>1</sup>

With this very Franciscan bit of philosophy it is not hard to feel the mind of Hopkins sympathizing. In several of his poems there seems to be the attempt to *re-trace* the transition from innate memory to insight through the senses. *Ash-boughs* is a good example.

Not of all my eyes see, wandering on the world,  
Is anything a milk to the mind so, so sighs deep  
Poetry to it, as a tree whose boughs break in the sky.

The words and phrases he uses—"boughs break," "combs creep," "touch," "groping,"—all suggest inchoate sensation beginning to burgeon. And some of his most striking expressions in other poems seem to be those in which sight and sound recover their common origin in touch: "hailropes," "wolfsnow," etc.

In the last two lines of *Ash-boughs* is the deep thought that lies behind the sensuous display:

It is old earth's groping towards the steep  
Heaven whom she child us by.

"Old earth" is the *Natura Communis* which in each man is a principle formally distinct from his individuality. "Heaven" is the agent which must be postulated, both on Augustinian and on Aristotelian grounds, in order to account for "habitual knowing"; it is "the fine delight that fathers thought, the live spur lancing" of a later poem.

From this union results the twin principle that constitutes each rational soul: innate knowing and innate desire. Knowing is, of its nature, content with nature. But desire has "heaven" for its objective; it pursues individual reality, first by self-assertion through abstractive knowing, finally by self-surrender to the real individual, the Creator, who implanted it.

In the first act (memory), which is dominated by universal nature, desire is universal. In the second act (understanding) it concentrates attention upon some particular aspect of universal nature which either represents a real individual, or is a single distinct idea.

<sup>1</sup> Visus ad omnes alios sensus quodammodo est omnis sensus, sicut homo est quodammodo omnis creatura propter naturalem convenientiam cum omnibus.

The innate tendency (*desiderium naturale*) of the mind, when the sense-organs are stimulated, is, *first* to see the cause in nature as a living whole, then *secondly* to restrict this universal cause to a particular spiritual substance. This innate tendency is the guarantee that a spiritual substance is really the cause of the material stimulus.<sup>1</sup>

But since such a representation, however true, can only be a *re*-presentation, not a real presence, innate desire cannot be content with the second act, but must press on to the third act, the will.

The restlessness of the mind is the restlessness of an almost unlimited activity: and so it cannot be arrested by any form of nature that it passes through, but only by the presence of the object it was born to rest in.<sup>2</sup>

In the third act (that of the will inspired by memory and purified by understanding) is the final and proper expression of innate desire—as described, for example, in *The Cloud of Unknowing*.

But to return to the first act, which is where poetic inspiration must first be looked for. It is an observable fact that we are aware of a general pattern of sense-qualities before we are aware of any particular individual, though the presence of an individual is implicit in our awareness.<sup>3</sup>

Add to this Scotus's idea of evolutionary sensation. It is possible to be momentarily aware of nature evolving as a pattern of sense-qualities in the very instant that we are aware of the individual that is the cause and climax of the evolution, but *before* abstraction has taken place which would isolate the individual from the pattern. I am sorry for this cumbrous explanation, but it is the nearest I can get to a notion which is common to the "inscape" of Hopkins and to the "*visio naturae existentis*" and the "*species specialissima*" of Scotus.

<sup>1</sup> *Desiderium naturale est in intellectu cognoscente effectum ad cognoscendum causam, et in cognoscente causam in universali est desiderium naturale ad cognoscendum illum in particulari et distincte; desiderium autem naturale non est ad impossibile, ex natura desiderantis, quia tunc esset frustra. Ergo non est impossibile intellectui, ex parte intellectus, cognoscere substantiam immaterialem in particulari, ex quo cognoscit materiale, quod est effectum eius. Et ita primum obiectum intellectus non excludit illud immateriale.*

<sup>2</sup> *Indeterminatio intellectus est indeterminatio activitatis quasi illimitatae. Et ideo non determinatur per formam . . . sed tantummodo per praesentiam obiecti circa quod nata est determinari.*

<sup>3</sup> *Sensus per se non sentit singulare, tamen sentit naturam extra animam primo, sed ut coniunctam singularitati necessario.*

Something stands out as a symbol or rallying-point of the evolutionary tendency (the innate *habitus*) of universal nature, it is a *species* or image of it; and yet this same thing retains its unique claim to be itself and nothing else: it is *specialissima*. If there is any Scotist equivalent for Hopkins's inscape, it is the *species specialissima*; but Augustine's theory of Evolution and Plato's Ideas are necessary in order to understand the connection. "Plato's opinion," says Scotus, referring to the ideal humanity that exists on its own, "cannot be rejected out-of-hand, for there seems no reason why nature-as-such should not attain its own individuality."

The *species specialissima* does not represent any particular individual, a woman, a horse, or a mulberry tree, as it is afterwards known by abstraction and secondary images; no more does inscape. It represents the Ideal Person to whom universal nature tends. "It is old earth's groping towards the steep Heaven whom she child us by."

There is a sentence of Scotus which opens up an even more difficult question, but which, by itself, may throw light on what I have called the blend of Platonic idealism and Franciscan realism, in both Scotus and Hopkins.

God's knowing is life, creative life. The creature as He knows it here and now, *is* the Ideal.<sup>1</sup>

In "inscape," as I understand it, there is a momentary contact between the Creative Agent who *causes* habitual knowing in me, and the created individual who *terminates* it in my actual insight. And the medium of this contact, if I am correct, is the *species specialissima*, the dynamic image of nature being created. In easier language: the poet, if the original motion of his mind is unimpeded, does perhaps see things for a moment as God sees them, and he experiences the creative thrill, as thus expressed:

I kiss my hand  
To the stars, lovely-asunder  
Starlight, wafting him out of it; and  
Glow, glory in thunder;  
Kiss my hand to the dappled-with-damson west:

<sup>1</sup> *Cognitio Dei est vita realiter creatrix . . . creatura ut ab Ipso intellecta est idea.* Cf. Gilson, *The Spirit of Mediaeval Philosophy*, p. 460.



Since, tho' he is under the world's splendour and wonder,  
 His mystery must be instressed, stressed;  
 For I greet him the days I meet him, and bless when I under-  
 stand.

Note that this stanza precedes immediately that other stanza ("and here the faithful waver, the faithless fable and miss") which I have taken to be about the difference between Augustine's Evolution which the faithful of 1870 perhaps boggled at, and Darwinism which the faithless glibly swallowed. The notion of "instress, stress" which sticks like a gaunt girder out of the otherwise beautiful structure, testifies to the metaphysical workshop where it was wrought. But it introduces fresh Scotist subtleties which may well be postponed to the Essay on Parmenides.

The practical question is: *when*, on what occasions, is the original motion of the mind unimpeded? And here is a fairly easy and obvious point of contact between Scotus and Hopkins.

In an acute analysis of the part played in knowing by effort or desire, Scotus enumerates two occasions when the first act can be experienced in isolation and unimpeded:

A man has first thoughts on every occasion when some odd thing re-occurs, and when he awakens from sleep.<sup>1</sup>

Already in September 1871, Hopkins had described the first typical occasion: the re-occurrence of some odd thing:—

On this walk I came to a cross-road I had been at in the morning, carrying it in another "running instress" . . .

He then mentions an instance of how a symbol, or rallying-point, gives reality to a dream-picture, and continues:

And what is this running instress, so independent of at least the immediate scape of the thing which unmistakably distinguishes and individualises things? Not imposed outward as for instance by melancholy or by strong feeling: I can easily distinguish that instress. I think it is the same running instress by which we identify or, better, test and refuse to identify with our various suggestions a thought which has just slipped from the mind at an interruption.<sup>2</sup>

I find three points here which confirm my previous diagnosis. First, the rejection of "immediate scape" suggests to me that it is not the object individuated in space and time that he is after,

<sup>1</sup> Toties habet homo primas cogitationes quoties sibi recurrunt diversa obiecta, et quoties surgit a somno.

<sup>2</sup> Notebooks, pp. 153-4.



but the deeper unity of the *species specialissima*. Next, his distinction between natural and imposed instress suggests Scotus's distinction between *habitus* and *habilitas*, between innate knowing and desire which tend spontaneously to their original source, and the acquired tendencies of the soul which are influenced by secondary images and individual needs. Finally, the last line, about identifying a thought, suggests those lines in his last poem on poetic inspiration:

The widow of an insight lost she lives, with aim  
Now known and hand at work now never wrong.

It will be noted that in the situation described in these last lines, the material object is no longer present. The inchoate word has been illumined by sensation; and now, purified by understanding, it must be related back to its original cause. Speaking of the confused vision of the innate memory, Scotus has the following:

The object in itself does not need to be present to terminate the act, but only to cause it, so that when there is a sufficient cause of the act there is no need for the presence of an object to terminate it—as is clear in the case of one who sees a creature in the Divine Essence.<sup>1</sup>

He appears to suggest, in this difficult passage, that the identification of a thing in the innate memory has some faint analogy with the vision of it in the Divine Essence.

The second typical occasion—awakening from sleep—is so obvious an instance of innate memory passing into actual insight, of universal nature being narrowed down to a single point, that it needs no commentary. But that Hopkins was on the alert for both such typical occasions is suggested again and again in those nature-notes which were the workshop of his poetic brain. I select two at random from August 1874:

(1) Aug. 14th. . . . a wedge of sunlight streamed down through a break in the clouds upon the valley: a hawk also was hanging on the hover.

(2) Aug. 28th. Rising half an hour earlier than usual I saw the full moon of brassyish colour and beautifully dappled hanging a little above the clump in the pasture opposite my window.

<sup>1</sup> Non oportet obiectum in se esse praesens propter terminationem actus, sed tantum propter causationem, ita quod quando est aliqua causa sufficiens ipsius actus, non requiritur praesentia obiecti propter terminationem, sicut patet de vidente creaturam in essentia divina.

No doubt these same things, "re-occurring" in different circumstances, occasioned the first lines of two later poems:

I caught this morning morning's minion,

I awoke in the midsummer not to call night, in the white and the walk of the morning: the moon, etc.

There are various other passages in Scotus and in Hopkins which bear upon this theme. There is, for instance, I believe, an explicit and literal reference to the *species specialissima* in the revealing but rather overwrought poem (No. 21) *Henry Purcell*. The odd word "arch-especial" in line 2 may be an echo of it. But I find the actual reference in lines 7 and 8—though it sounds far-fetched when taken out of its background. Scotus's words:

*species specialissima cuius singulare fortius et efficacius primo movet sensum, sive sit audibile, sive, etc.*

might be translated as:

the most intimate displaying of the self that first so strongly and prevailingly moves the sense of hearing. . . .

And Hopkins, of what finds him in the melody, says:

. . . it is the rehearsal

Of own, of abrupt self there so thrusts on, so throngs the ear.

The foreword to the poem makes it clear that it is not the lonely, incommunicable self—what Scotus calls the *ultima solitudo*—that he is after, but the richer self which is part of an ideal pattern. For what he praises above all in the musician is that he has—

uttered in notes the very make and species of man as created both in him and in all men generally.

"The species as created both in him and in all men" certainly suggests the *species specialissima*. But what Hopkins praised above all in a work of art was "inscape." Therefore, there is a *prima facie* case for identifying inscape with the *species specialissima*. Indeed, understood in this sense, it is what we all praise as superlative. It is what Coleridge, for instance, praises above all in Shakespeare: the ability "to become all things, yet forever remain himself."

The knowledge that both Scotus and Hopkins attached importance to "individuality" has led some critics to identify inscape with *haecceitas*. "Inscape precisely covers what Scotus calls *haecceitas*."<sup>1</sup> It is a possible shortcut, but it has pitfalls. Hopkins makes it quite clear that he identifies inscape with nature or essence, and *haecceitas* with *arbitrium* or "moral pitch."<sup>2</sup> And he was well aware that the distinction between nature and *haecceitas* is fundamental in Scotus.

Incidentally, the difference between the two selves which, elsewhere, I have found expressed between the *arbitrium* and the *voluntas naturae*,—and which recalls Claudel's *animus* and *anima*—seems to be the subject of these lines in Caradoc's soliloquy:

I all my being have hacked in half with her neck: one part,  
Reason, selfdisposal, choice of better or worse way,  
Is corpse now, cannot change; my other self, this soul,  
Life's quick, this kind this keen self-feeling. . . .

The implied opposition between the two selves opens up a dilemma which joins the conclusion of this article to the conclusion of the previous one. The dilemma begins with Scotus's theory of "indifferent acts." The first act (of innate memory and sensitive insight) is a thing of beauty; but left to itself it has no entitative value, it is not a God-loving act. This consideration haunts almost all Hopkins's visions of beauty, and serves to pin closer the connection between poetic inspiration and the first act. For it might be objected that the examples of "re-occurrence" and "awakening from sleep" are the common change of poets and need no reference to Scotus. But it is precisely in the passage about "re-occurrence" and "awakening from sleep" that Scotus is discussing the moral value of the first act; he says—

The first act of thought is not in the power of the will, hence it is clear that the first act does not incline to sin.<sup>3</sup>

Here are two echoes of this in Hopkins. In the first, he rejoices in the absence of sin:

What is all this juice and all this joy?  
A strain of the earth's sweet being in the beginning

<sup>1</sup> Gerard Manley Hopkins, W. A. M. Peters, p. 23.

<sup>2</sup> *Notebooks*, pp. 322, 328.

<sup>3</sup> *Prima cogitatio non est in potestate voluntatis, unde prima cogitatio ut patet supra non inducit ad peccatum.*

In Eden garden.—Have, get, before it cloy,  
Before it cloud, Christ, lord, and sour with sinning.

In the second, written later, he laments the obverse, namely, that the incapability of sin means the absence of will-activity, and therefore the absence of Godward-ness, unless it is consciously controlled:

For good grows wild and wide,  
Has shades, is nowhere none;  
But right must seek a side  
And choose for chieftain one.

Therefore this masterhood,  
This piece of perfect song,  
This fault-not-found-with good  
Is neither right nor wrong.

What he says of poetry, he says also of prayer. The first act is the "sigh or aspiration or stirring of the spirit towards God, it is a *forestall* of the thing to be done"; but "there must be something which shall be truly the creature's in the work of corresponding with grace: this is the *arbitrium*, the verdict on God's side" (i.e. for God).<sup>1</sup>

Here the dilemma joins up with the literary dilemma outlined in the previous article—how to release innate desire, the soul's abiding energy, and yet control it with distinct understanding. But here also the dilemma becomes too complicated to be unravelled as a tail-piece. I must conclude by suggesting that it is another version of the old dilemma between Beauty and Truth.

Beauty is the *species*, the image of nature-being-created.

Truth is the word, the reason why it is created.

Scotus, at this stage, appeared to offer him a solution which could both be grasped by intuition and justified by reason. For Scotus told him:

(i) That we can have insight into what is going on behind the outworks of secondary images and ideas.

(ii) That what is going on here and now is the act of Creation.

(iii) That the reason for Creation is (and always was and will be) the Humanity of Christ Our Lord, the *Totus Christus*.

<sup>1</sup> *Notebooks*, p. 333.

# 'AVOIDING-ACTION'

By

MARY EGERTON

HE LAUGHED with elegant jollity, viewing himself carefully in a conjectural image as he shook hands with his departing guest. When the priest had gone he sank back in his leather chair and poured himself the last of the Richebourg '23 from his decanter.

They had been unforgettable, those months collecting folk-songs in Ireland. The children had worn an almost angelic dignity and self-possession; and the adults, even the oldest, had an air of veiled ecstasy. Common illusions, no doubt, brewed in the eager imaginations of visitors; but when all the misery and rancour underlying the charm had been recognized, there remained a rare vein of poetry in the race. He had come nearer to embracing the Faith in that setting than ever before or since. Why had he held back? Was it squeamishness merely; or was it reluctance to lose the court paid to the sinner, the attentions enjoyed by the sophisticated sheep, straying outside the flock? In any case doubt was no longer a legitimate barrier.

He sipped his wine, swallowing a little, breathing out gently, and letting the fragrance float through his senses. To accept the discipline of faith though one could not apprehend its cause was a valid act of personal humility. Yet to understand the language, the passwords, the maze of the temptations, the code of private reservations of the *élite* of the faithful, and still to remain sympathetically aloof, out of the grasp of authority, that held a different fascination of its own; the posture of the Archangel Ruined, Thomas Arnold would spitefully have called it.

So from time to time Morton found himself enquiring with these calm, sometimes, it seemed, almost disinterested priests, into the condition of his soul; but hitherto the results had always been to lead him to the very brink of submission, from which, after a few moments of lively indecision, he would withdraw. Sometimes, as he hovered at the critical edge like an irresolute



would-be swimmer on the edge of a swimming-pool, he half wished that one of his companions would give him a deciding push. But always he found himself restrained by his rooted sensuality, swaying over that definitive edge, fascinated by the idea of taking the plunge, but unready to suffer the indignity of floundering in a strange element. It would be like learning to swim when one was grown up. Such accomplishments should be acquired unconsciously in childhood. How much better to have lived in an age of comprehensive orthodoxy—governed by enlightenment, of course—when an adult man did not have to spend time searching laboriously for the alphabet of the language of life.

Morton pressed the last fragment of Camembert into his mouth, drained his glass, wiped with his napkin a few crumbs from a still modest paunch, and called for his bill. Alfredo completed the ritual of departure by ushering him to the door with an effusion of conventional compliments. What joy to see His Excellency again!—Morton's grandfather had been an ambassador and Alfredo could never be persuaded that the status was not hereditary—Had the lunch been adequate? In these vile times it could not be more. With a black market one had bad bargains and these unspeakable *mezzosignori*; but without it—he shrugged his shoulders, then glared in mock despair—*Dobbiamo tutti mangiare!* without it one needed the aid of the *spiriti*, a *munaciello particolare*. Did His Excellency intend to return to Sorrento? If so he must allow Alfredo's brother Peppino to be of service. Unlimited credit . . . every facility. *Molto discreto. Tante Grazie. Addio.*

Outside spring was playing at being summer, and Charlotte Street beamed back at the sunshine in an excess of gratification, like an old drab responding to unaccustomed flattery. Geraniums sang from bright little platforms of window-boxes; the ragged man who turned the handle of the barrel-organ looked almost hopeful; merchants with Mediterranean faces and East London accents congregated on the pavements outside their shops to feel, with atavistic satisfaction, the sun's touch. Why now did he find his feet leading him away from that amiable quarter towards the bustle and progressive vulgarity of Oxford Street? He did not know; but in the absence of any alternative influence, continued in the direction his feet were leading him, and crossed the seething thoroughfare, pausing on the pavement of the south side to buy



an afternoon edition of the *Evening Standard*. For the moment he stood in a door-way, out of the current of human bodies, and surveyed all the visible evidence of civilization. Lately he had experienced an increasing number of moments like the present one, when not only the general crush and churn of existence, but these particular pleasures and pursuits which once had seemed inexhaustible, infinite sources of wonder and profit, appeared completely unreal, as though they were merely incidental to some essential and separate matter. He had never cared for power, in its cruder manifestations, at least; and if friendship, knowledge, the success and prestige of his judgment, art itself were merely incidental, then the question was, to what must they give place? He found himself walking again down a narrow street, over the reeking grill of a basement café, past a mournful music shop full of pictures of obscure vocalists with enormous smiles, past a window showing long black boots with highly developed heels. He came into Soho Square and now he knew his destination. Outside the Catholic church he stopped, hesitated, and climbed the steps of the entrance. As he passed through the tall doors and met the soft, cool light and the sweet odour of the interior he was touched by the familiar feeling, which visiting a Catholic church always brought him, of being in a sanctuary. He trailed two fingers in the font, crossed himself and walked slowly down the aisle, but no longer alone; for the act had aroused his slumbering inquisitors; already he could hear in his ear the malicious squeak of Lilliputian Eumenides. "Well, well, let it be played again—the charade dear to the antiquarian in search of a soul, balm to the sufferer from egoist's heart."

Morton frowned and moved uneasily before the candles lit at the shrine of St. Anthony. "Why do you linger," the persistent voices asked, "in this solemn muddle of provincial architecture where no *Sanctus* by Dufay will rise and melt against frescoes painted by Ghirlandajo; where you need expect no entertainment of fashionable wit, hallowed and heightened by submission to a mystery, no esoteric ironies of hierarchical intrigue, no aesthetic attraction whatever?"

Outside the insulated babble of gibes that prodded his nerves, there was silence in the church. Silence: he looked for a sign and found none, nor any relief from the cold ache of personal inadequacy. He felt his breathing quicken involuntarily and braced

himself against the threat of panic. He knelt down, not without a twinge of embarrassment, like a woman who thinks of her appearance even as she bares her body to the surgeon's knife. To partake of eternity, not for the sake of being immortal, but to answer that sublime and imperative summons which layers of accumulated sensuality could muffle but not extinguish; that was what he required; and what had he, what was he willing to give? He had shut his eyes; now, as he opened them wearily, they rested on the crucifix and he quickly averted his gaze. Why did love always seem to imply hate and pain? Manichæus was crucified too by that historical trinity. Perhaps, after all, the obvious was the true, and the last word lay with the Gibbons and not the Eckharts; perhaps religious feeling and especially religious humility was merely a refinement of self-love, and our aspirations the dreams of improved anthropoids with morbidly developed frontal lobes. A woman and a little girl were kneeling beside him at the saint's shrine. The child prayed in bursts of ferocious intensity, relieved by pauses when she sat back on her heels, scratched herself and looked around inquisitively. The woman was rapt in prayer; her face, red, coarse and stupid, was relaxed and exalted in confident communion. At the sight, a choking rush of fury filled Morton's throat and his hands trembled with desire to strike the presumptuous assurance from her face. But he turned away and the shallow emotion evaporated, leaving behind dregs of shame and naked loneliness. Grace seemed in that instance to have form and substance, imminent and discernible, but out of his reach and so revealing the route to which his life was bound. It was a mechanic circle, large enough to give its victim the illusion of brave advances and adventure, while imperceptibly enslaving him until diminishing returns of pleasure could no longer cover the knowledge that his will was lost, and he condemned to keep perpetual company with a self he hated. Every ostensible variation in mood and intention, every gesture of challenge and independence were routine moves on a circle equidistant from the central tyranny of a vacuum; they had happened before and they would recur again and again without promise of relief, until he would come to know every trick and false climax of the monotonous performance as a remorseful clown knows the antics he abhors.

Instantly the spectre was rejected with a practised laugh at

"puritan ogres chasing their tails," but before it could be dragged, struggling and screaming, into some dark padded cell of the mind, it succeeded in crying with terrible emphasis, "There is one stage of the circle you will remember next time round." Repressing a shudder Morton went briskly out.

In the sunlight he blinked welcome to the faithful world of taste and touch. A soft, delicate breeze came to meet him shyly, and he took off his hat in token of friendship and breathed in deep measures of air. The brief metaphysical ecstasy was passed, and its glimpse of hell vague and remote as a dim memory of a nightmare in childhood. The little agony of self-examination was already being recast as wry comedy. Nevertheless he felt restless and depressed, as though he were being watched or followed. Sympathetic laughter was what he needed and the companionship of civilized bibbers. A witty little confessional party would wash away the last morbid cobweb. He hailed a cab and gave the driver the address of an afternoon drinking club near Oxford Circus.

## GEORGE IV AS MUSICIAN

By

SIMON TOWNELEY WORSTHORNE

A DISTINGUISHED biographer of George the Fourth in deploring the attitude which sees him only in the light of a Patron of the Arts has shown that "he was a discriminating collector and an intelligent critic of pictures, he thoroughly understood music, and was not an indifferent performer."<sup>1</sup> He was, in fact, a leader of musical taste and one of the first Englishmen to appreciate Mozart besides taking an active part in the introduction of Haydn into London society.

Dr. Burney speaks highly of the interest taken in music by King George the Third and Queen Charlotte, but, in the King's case, it was an interest that centred on Handel rather than modern composers. However, his children were brought up as executant musicians—as singers and players. The Prince of Wales learnt the

<sup>1</sup> Roger Fulford, *George the Fourth*, 1935, p. 182.

violoncello from the celebrated John Crosdill and arranged for performances of chamber music in the music-room, considered by Horace Walpole to be the jewel of all the rooms at Carlton House. He himself performed there with a band which numbered amongst its members W. Cramer, Crosdill, W. T. Parke, Shield and Schroeter, the famous old pianist whose widow later fell in love with Haydn. Nor was his prowess confined to performance in his own house; Parke tells us of Sunday concerts at Lord Hampden's, led by Cramer again, at which the Prince of Wales and the Dukes of Gloucester and Cumberland performed, "the two former on the violoncello and the latter on the violin."<sup>1</sup> Equally they were performing members of the Noblemen and Gentlemen's Catch Club, the Prince of Wales and Duke of Cumberland being elected in 1786, the Duke of York in 1787, and the Dukes of Gloucester and Clarence in 1788 and 1789 respectively. We know that "the much admired glees 'Hail Star of Brunswick' and 'The Mighty Conqueror' were composed especially by Mr. Webbe for his late Majesty George IV, who invariably took his call and sang in his glee; and the Duke of Cambridge (elected 1807) attended to the very last year of his life—1850—and rarely omitted his call, his favourite glee being Webbe's 'Glorious Apollo'."<sup>2</sup>

But perhaps the most convincing testimony to the musical abilities of the Prince is given by Haydn to whom he showed the utmost courtesy, inviting him to play twenty-six times at Carlton House and presenting the great composer to the King. Haydn was also invited to Oatlands by the Duke and Duchess of York and describes his visit in a letter to Marianne von Genzinger dated December 20, 1791. The company included the Prince of Wales and they played Haydn's music from ten until two in the morning. Haydn directed the performances from the piano, with the Duchess sitting on his left and the Prince of Wales with his violoncello on his right. He writes that "the Prince is the most handsome fellow on God's earth, has an extraordinary love of music and very much feeling." The Prince was responsible for commissioning in December 1791 the Hopner portrait of Haydn now at Buckingham Palace. Haydn

<sup>1</sup> W. T. Parke, *Musical Memoirs*, 1830, Vol. I, p. 89.

<sup>2</sup> Viscount Gladstone, *The Story of the Noblemen and Gentlemen's Catch Club*, 1930, p. 32.

was also present at a performance at York House on November 21, 1791, at which the Prince gave a solo and the Duchess of York played the piano in a concerto by Geminiani.<sup>1</sup> We may conclude, therefore, that Haydn's opinion was based on first-hand knowledge, and that, writing privately to a friend, he had no reason to be other than impartial.

As a critic, too, the Prince seems to have had a lively and stimulating judgment. In talking of music to Dr. Burney it could be said that he was only doing his duty. But the description left of their meetings shows that he preferred to talk on this subject at greater length than mere good manners demanded. After a dinner party given by Lord Melbourne, Burney records the conversation:<sup>2</sup>

I had almost made a solemn vow, early in life, to quit the world without ever drinking a *dry dram*; but the heroic virtue of a long life was overset by his Royal Highness, through the irresistible temptation to hobbing and nobbing with such a partner in a glass of cherry brandy! The spirit of it, however, was so finely subdued that it was not more potent than a dose of peppermint water; which I have always called a dram.

The conversation was lively and general the chief part of the evening; but about midnight it turned upon music, on which subject his Royal Highness deigned so wholly to address himself to me, that we kept it up a full half-hour, without anyone else offering a word. We were, generally, in perfect tune in our opinions; though once or twice I ventured to dissent from his Royal Highness; and once he condescended to come over to my argument: and he had the skill, as well as nobleness, to put me as perfectly at my ease in expressing my notions, as I should have been with any other perfectly well-bred man. . . . When the Prince rose to go to another room, we met Lady Melbourne and her daughter, just returned from the opera; to which they had been while we sat over wine (and eke the cherry brandy); and from which they came back in exact time for coffee! The Prince here, coming up to me, most graciously took my hand, and said, "I am glad we got, at last, to our favourite subject." He then made me sit down by him, close to the keys of a piano-forte; where, in a low voice, but face to face, we talked again upon music, and uttered our sentiments with, I may safely say, equal ease and freedom; so politely he encouraged my openness and sincerity.

<sup>1</sup> *Idem*, p. 164.

<sup>2</sup> Fanny d'Arblay, *Memoirs of Doctor Burney*, 1832, Vol. III, pp. 356-58.



The Prince was evidently very pleased by Dr. Burney for shortly afterwards, owing to some misunderstanding, they occupied neighbouring chairs at a concert where "he would not suffer me to relinquish my place, even to any of the Princes, his brothers, when they came to him! nor even to any fine lady!" Dr. Burney was kept in the place of honour throughout the concert. Another time at the opera he was called into the royal box and took "a snug seat" behind the Prince who entered "with his usual vivacity, into discussions upon the performance; and so re-*jeunied* me by his gaiety and condescension, joined to his extraordinary judgment on musical subjects, that I held forth in return as if I had been but five-and-twenty!"

In 1806, the year following the famous dinner party, London heard its first Mozart opera, *La Clemenza di Tito*. This performance is the means of showing how advanced was the musical taste of the Prince of Wales. During his visits to London Haydn had tried in vain to interest the public in Mozart's music; the Prince, however, possessed the score of *La Clemenza di Tito*. Croly<sup>1</sup> describes it as the first to be seen in this country, "and, as a signal favour from the Prince to Mrs. Billington, was lent for her benefit.<sup>2</sup> How worthy that extraordinary woman was of the distinction she soon displayed, in the presence of the admiring orchestra and vocal *corps* of the Opera House, by sitting down to the score, playing the whole opera through, and singing the part of *Vitellia*, at sight." Geiringer<sup>3</sup> believes it to have been the autograph copy. But there appears to be no evidence that it was; for that is now in the Staatsbibliothek, Berlin. The copy belonging to the Prince is likely to have been the full score in two volumes, still in the King's Music Library.

After his appointment as Regent in 1811 the Prince appears to have spent less time on musical activities. However, his encouragement of the art and especially his appreciation of Mozart may have had a marked effect on taste in London. It is interesting to note that Mozart's operas were the object of intense admiration by a group of amateurs between 1806 and 1811 when the second public performance, this time of the *Magic*

<sup>1</sup> G. Croly, *The Personal History of His Late Majesty George the Fourth*, 1841, Vol. II, p. 274.

<sup>2</sup> *La Clemenza di Tito*, Mozart's first opera to reach London, was first performed at the King's Theatre, March 27th, 1806.

<sup>3</sup> Karl Geiringer, *Haydn*, 1947, p. 118.



*Flute*, was given on May 9th. Two articles in the *Harmonicon*<sup>1</sup> describe the activities of this body which produced *Titus*, *Don Giovanni* and *Così fan tutte*. According to the anonymous writer, "with the exception of the *Clemenza di Tito* brought out by Mrs. Billington for her benefit in 1806, the first opera of Mozart's ever heard in this country was got up by a party of amateurs, and performed, oratorio fashion, without action, amidst the mingled effluvia of canvas, oil and turpentine in a city warehouse": it was a performance of *Don Giovanni*. However, the author sadly admits that, directly the public performances of Mozart's works were successfully sponsored, these impromptu meetings were given up. During the Regency, London saw, for the first time, *Così fan tutte* and the *Magic Flute* (1811), *Figaro* (1812) and *Don Giovanni* (1817) performed in an English translation, in the same year. The *Requiem* had been produced in 1801 and was described by Parke as "a composition of infinite science and dullness,"<sup>2</sup> for which opinion he was violently attacked by the reviewer of his book in 1831 in the *Harmonicon*. Its success amongst musicians was certain from the outset. And it is interesting to find that when it was chosen as the requiem for Weber's funeral in 1826 it was feared that the congregation who would assemble to hear it would be too large for the Catholic chapel in Moorfields. Therefore the Dean and Chapter of St. Paul's were approached with a view to the granting of permission for a Catholic service in the Cathedral. And although the request was courteously refused, a meeting of such a body with a priest in attendance to carry the message back to his superior must be, for that date, unique. It was about this time, too, that the distinction between conductor and leader of the orchestra came to be made. Parke,<sup>3</sup> noticing the first Vocal Concert in the new reign of George IV remarked that "this innovation at first gave considerable uneasiness to the leader; but I suppose he was appeased by the conductor in the same way as Trinculo appeases Stephano in *The Tempest*, by saying to him, 'You shall be king, and I'll be viceroy over you.'" It seems almost symbolic of the new age that with a new king there should appear also hints of a new musical dynasty of virtuoso conductors to succeed the eighteenth-century vocal tyrant.

<sup>1</sup> *Harmonicon*, 1831, *Autobiography of an Amateur Singer*.

<sup>2</sup> Parke, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 290.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. II, p. 151.

George IV appears to have kept up his musical interests at Brighton. After a quiet domestic dinner with Lord and Lady Conyngham, their children and a few guests, Mr. Fulford describes the gentlemen following "the King to the music-room, where he sat down, and, with two Miss Liddells (daughters of Lord Ravensworth), sang Italian trios."<sup>1</sup> It was one musical evening of many; some, it is true, were of more brilliance, such as the visit of Rossini in December 1824, when the King took the composer into the music-room to hear his "inimitable band" play the overture to *La Gazza Ladra* and "buona sera" from the *Barber of Seville*. It is not surprising that the King found in him a sympathetic character. In London they sang duets together and it is said that the King had to interrupt a performance due to a mistake in the time; Rossini, it is reported, remarked, "Sire, you have every right to do exactly as you please; I will follow you to the grave."<sup>2</sup> Before Rossini left London the King asked the Duke of Wellington to give an evening party in order that he might hear him once more.

From these few observations on the musical taste and abilities of George IV, it would be wrong to conclude that there was a high standard of appreciation in general society. There is too much evidence against such an opinion in the arranging of great works by inferior composers and the infusion of "silly trash" into music already perfect. However, it is certain that the King himself was possessed of a discerning taste and did not use his position simply to show off a royal *tour de force*. For his abilities were displayed not to a circle of wearied courtiers but to his friends and musicians of eminent rank. In 1806 it was recognized that "although general patronage has not been abundant, there have not been wanting distinguished partialists, who, imitating the enlightened liberality and good taste of the illustrious heir to the throne, George Prince of Wales, have nurtured and stimulated British genius to that emulative exertion, which has at length conducted the art of music in England to its present state of superior excellence."<sup>3</sup> Whether we can agree with the opinion on general musical taste or not, we can be certain that the King was more than a mere Patron of the Arts.

<sup>1</sup> Fulford, *op. cit.*, p. 222.

<sup>2</sup> Toye, *Rossini*, 1934, p. 117.

<sup>3</sup> Parke, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 3.

## BROADCASTING

THE latest expansion of television to the midland counties could have been made an opportunity for freeing the new medium from control by its elder brother, the B.B.C. proper. No such gesture of emancipation is intended. Instead we have the spectacle of the old firm battling to retain the maximum control over the new subsidiary company whose possibilities seem to be almost menacingly unlimited. In certain quarters of the Corporation, television is still regarded as a mere extension of sound-broadcasting. No doubt the official recognition of television as an essentially separate and independent medium can be staved off for some further considerable time; but sooner or later it must be accepted not only that the nature, laws and problems of television work quite differently from those of sound-broadcasting, but that a good radio producer is not necessarily a good television producer. To suppose that the two were normally interchangeable would be about as rational as to suppose that a poet must be able to paint, or a psychiatrist be expert in removing his patient's appendix. Of course no one has yet said publicly that they are interchangeable, but there have been one or two moves to fill new television appointments which suggest the thin edge of a long, deep wedge.

In my opinion the fear of the challenge of television entertained by many radio pundits has been excessive and unrealistic. For although there are certain kinds of programme, such as plays, outside broadcasts, variety shows, etc., which it seems likely and natural that television will gradually take over from sound broadcasting, there are others, such as music, talks (on all except primarily visual subjects) and literary or abstract feature programmes, in which the introduction of vision would not only fail to add a useful element, but would impose a further and unnecessary strain upon the performer or speaker. When Stuart Hampshire or Donald MacKinnon broadcasts the substance of the programme is contained in the spoken word and anything likely to distract attention from the speech is an impertinence. Similarly, in a feature programme like *New Judgment on H. G. Wells*, written and chiefly spoken by Mr. Kingsley Martin, the enforcement of a visual element could only have vulgarized the objective authenticity evoked by the writer with narrative and illustration in the spoken word. The actors supporting Mr. Kingsley Martin served the producer Robert Gittings fairly well by subduing their professional personalities to the importance of the stark meaning of the words. If their faces had had to appear this effect would have been unattainable; the programme would have become just another "play."

It is interesting to remember at an early stage in the development of this new conjuring trick of science, television, that the very width of

its range may create aesthetic contradictions. Hitherto art has tended to be produced through relatively restricted media of communication. Consideration of art may be completely out of date in another decade or two. Yet perhaps there are certain kinds of human experience that will always be best "told."

JOHN MCCONNELL

## RECENT FICTION

LOOKING back over the novels I have had to read for review since last October, what are my general impressions? One, obviously, is the enormous external influence of the war and politics on the novel. In fact some books labelled novels belonged to journalism rather than to art, being thinly disguised political pamphlets or war-correspondents' unused material, hastily thrown into the form of fiction. Another thing that strikes me is the subtler and even wider spread internal influence of modern psychology. It is very rare to find a novel nowadays whose author is not affected in some way by the Freudian hypothesis or his own version of it. Not only is the language of psycho-analysis freely used even by the thriller-writers but, in the drama of human relationships, unconscious compulsions now play as large a part as conscious motives. Even a popular best-seller like Daphne du Maurier deliberately and by no means unskillfully uses Freudian material in *The Parasites*, material of whose implication she seemed so superbly unaware in that fascinating fantasy of the unconscious, *Rebecca*. Even Malcolm Muggeridge, in his witty satire *Affairs of the Heart*, while being amusingly rude about psycho-analysts proceeds to analyse his characters' frustrations and repressed guilt with professional skill. My third impression is that there is an alarming tendency, especially in America, to write enormously and unnecessarily long novels. In about a fortnight I was faced with four novels of over seven hundred closely printed pages. Only one of these justified its length; the others were swollen and shapeless; indications, not of diligence, but of the loose and lazy writing.

Which out of some thirty or forty recent novels I have read recently struck me as memorable or interesting? In dealing with novels concerned with the war or politics I applied two rough tests. A cataclysm, however important historically or socially, is only raw material for the authentic novelist. Since he is an artist, not a social historian, he must use it imaginatively as the setting or the occasion for his human theme. My rough tests were: "Does the theme hold good apart from

the setting?" or "Could this particular effect be produced *only* by using the war or the political scene as its occasion?" To take an example outside my list, the theme of *The Heart of the Matter* is not dependent on its wartime *provenance*. Graham Greene uses both the war and the West African setting merely as the background to Scobie's moral dilemma. Among recent novels which pass one or other of these tests I put James Gould Cozzens' *Guard of Honour* in which an American air station is used as a brilliant focus for almost every conceivable human conflict and predicament. This novel, though enormously long, is so dazzlingly competent that it swept this jaundiced reader over the hurdles of technical mechanics, American slang and esoteric Air Force language with irresistible force. Robert Kee's *The Impossible Shore* just passes the test because, beyond its private and contemporary theme of a prisoner liberated from a German camp, there is the hint of the more universal one that liberty can be more alarming than restraint once a man has become "prison-minded." Philip Woodruff's *The Island of Chamba*, the study of an imaginary Oriental state suddenly awakened from its lotus-eating dream and flung into the competitive modern age by the withdrawal of British protection, also struck me as a genuine novel. Though the predicament of his mythical island intentionally typifies that of the princely states of India, Mr. Woodruff has not written a political tract. He shows the impact of an historical event on very vividly drawn human beings and gives as convincing a picture of East and West as they appear to each other's eyes as Forster's *Passage to India* or Ackerley's *Hindoo Holiday*. The withdrawal of the British from India is also the background of an extremely acute and sensitive study of an Anglo-Indian army family by a writer whose name is new to me—Parr Cooper. This brief novel *Time is So Short*, though marred by occasional sentimentality and archness, shows remarkable power of suggesting a great deal by the simplest, most economical means. I am interested to find that every character in it remains clear in my mind when most of the people in more pretentious—and more recently read—novels have faded into vague "types." The themes of war and internal revolution are handled more imaginatively by two men, unlike in style, approach and technique, but both masters of the concrete image. I have already written in *THE MONTH* about Anthony West's remarkable first novel *On a Dark Night*, in which the themes of war guilt and human responsibility are pursued beyond the grave into a hideously contemporary hell. *On a Dark Night* is too long, not because the author has been lazy, but because he has tried to pack too much into a single book. Tom Hopkinson in *Down the Long Slide* shows what can be done with the *nouvelle*, that admirable and neglected form, less than half the length of even a short novel, which taxes the writer's skill to the utmost.



This story of the flight of the old-guard revolutionary Brusilov from real or imagined enemies into the grim neutrality of a concentration camp on the "safe" side of the border is a brilliant piece of writing and characterization. It has the "double ring" typical of all Hopkinson's best work. Brusilov (perhaps the most convincing character he has ever drawn) is not merely a suspect in flight from a characteristic modern European situation; he is the guilty man in all of us who starts to pack without waiting to find out whether the "All is known" telegram is genuine or a hoax.

Nevertheless the two novels which have impressed me most are not concerned with war or politics. Unfortunately, P. H. Newby's latest, *The Young May Moon*, is the first of his that I have read. I am anxious to read his other four to discover the background of a talent which, in this new book, appears almost alarmingly controlled and mature. It is rare nowadays to find a novelist with such deliberate command of his material and with such art in creating exactly the effect he intends to create. The book manages to be both contemporary and timeless; he builds up a world out of the material of the modern world—banks, bakehouses, reservoirs, suburban streets—yet it has a curious dreamlike quality which reminds one of that haunting and neglected novel, Gerald Brennan's *Jack Robinson*. Its main theme is the relation between a father and his fifteen-year-old son, but its peculiar quality lies in its acute perception of those moments of communication which suddenly reveal human beings to each other before the fogs of self-interest and misunderstanding obscure them again.

The other novel, *Olivia*, by Olivia, ought not perhaps to be included in these notes since it was published considerably before any of the others I have mentioned. Nevertheless, of all the books that I have read in the last year, it is by far the most striking and the most memorable and the one I know I shall read many times again. Hardly longer than a long short story, published more than half a century after the events it describes, it is one of those phenomenal books which are written once in a lifetime and crystallize a single, unforgettable experience. The emotion of *Olivia* is not so much recollected in tranquillity as re-created with such intensity that the reader lives through it as if it were his own. Written with the most exquisite honesty and restraint, *Olivia* contains such a concentration of life that it has a peculiar effect on any reader attuned to it. I cannot tell whether men will be as profoundly moved by it as women are, but no one who cares for literature should miss this small masterpiece of story-telling and implication.

ANTONIA WHITE

## REVIEWS

### FACETS OF HOPKINS

*Immortal Diamond: Studies in Gerard Manley Hopkins*, edited by Norman Weyand, S.J. (Sheed & Ward 21s).

THIS bulky and in many ways valuable symposium was conceived as a centenary commemoration and was thus due to appear in 1944, but owing to wartime and post-war conditions its publication had to be delayed. To the impressive number of Jesuits who have written zealously and well about Hopkins we must now add the names of the two editors and nine other American members of the Society who have given us this new collection of critical essays.

Such a work was necessary and inevitable: as Fr. Weyand says in his Preface, the widespread interest in Hopkins's poetry "calls for studies in Hopkins by men who share the special background and training which was his. There are aspects of Hopkins which a Jesuit, naturally enough, is in the best position to understand." This is true as regards the doctrinal and professional values embedded in the poetry, but it gives no special weight to Chapters II, III, IV, and VI, which are concerned almost exclusively with literary values. It must be admitted that there is not a great deal in this book which is at once valuable and entirely new; but so devotedly have the contributors prepared themselves for their tasks, steeping themselves in the poet's work and reading everything available (before 1944) which had been written about it, that there are few pages which do not reflect light from some facet of that Immortal Diamond which is the focal-point of these eleven beams of critical inquiry.

There is a sense, however, in which (as Hopkins himself suggests<sup>1</sup>) it is not well to come too near things if you mean to hold them in a clear objective vision, and it will inevitably seem to many readers who are not Jesuits that at least five of the critics in this volume have—and quite naturally—been so eager to defend the spiritual integrity of their Society and the fundamental sanctity of Hopkins that they have failed to face boldly certain features in the poet's psychological make-up, with the result that some of their findings do not quite square with modern psychological common sense. For instance, these Jesuit critics will not admit that Hopkins, as a born poet, a natural artist, might have suffered some serious psycho-pathological disturbance (some mental 'trauma') because (1) his creative impulse was partially self-inhibited or otherwise frustrated, and (2) he did not find complete compensatory relief and self-fulfilment in the work

<sup>1</sup> *Letters to Dixon*, p. 154.

which he was doing. It is almost as if his present-day co-religionists in the Society feel that they would be guilty of a betrayal or heresy if they conceded one iota of truth to what they would probably call "the Freudian *canard*." Admittedly a good deal of "Freudian" speculation and literary criticism is *canard*; but the possible pathogenic nature of the "unconscious" is now generally acknowledged. I believe, therefore, that the concession of a point so simple and obvious, while not in any way invalidating the Catholic supernatural interpretation of Hopkins's "desolations," would have greatly strengthened the average educated reader's faith in the special insight into the poet's *conscious* mind which most of these essays evince.

An example of the uncompromising attitude I have described is to be found in Fr. M. C. Carroll's otherwise revealing *Hopkins and the Society of Jesus*: "Among all these facts two shine forth clearly and unmistakably. The first is negative—a negation of the importance of poetry in his life. . . . Henceforth he might nod at the Muse but never seriously court her" (p. 48). Never? But surely we can deduce from the *Letters* and the *Poems* that it was not all as simple and final as that. To suggest that Hopkins was not taking the art of poetry "seriously" when he discussed Sprung Rhythm, corrected his friends' poems, or was actually engaged in writing *The Windhover* and *Felix Randal* is to maintain an impossible paradox. It is no wonder, therefore, that both Fr. Carroll and Fr. R. V. Schoder (in his *What Does "The Windhover" Mean?*) fail to take into account the probable subliminal effects of Hopkins's conscious and deliberate and meritorious relegation of poetry to a subordinate place in his life. Fr. Schoder's interpretation of *The Windhover* does not take into account those two commonest meanings of the word "Buckle!" in line 10, namely "crumple up," "collapse under pressure"; hence he is unable to see in the sestet a reflection of the poet's predominant feeling about the character and Sacrifice of "Christ our Lord": "In his Passion all this strength was spent, this lissomness crippled, this beauty wrecked, this majesty beaten down."<sup>1</sup> And again: "Christ our Lord . . . was doomed to succeed by failure . . ."<sup>2</sup> Whoever cannot see in this poem a significant reconciliation of opposite tendencies has not yet fully read the poem. Apart from this point, Fr. Schoder's critique is sensitive and stimulating.

Fr. C. A. Burns's study of Hopkins as *Poet of Ascetic and Aesthetic Conflict* opens on a note of bluff candour: "Let it be plainly stated at the outset: Religious orders have no crying need of poets"; but this critic, also, falls between the two stools of (1) poetry considered by Hopkins as a gift from God, for His greater glory, and (2) Hopkins's

<sup>1</sup> *Note-books*, pp. 262-3.

<sup>2</sup> *Letters to Dixon*, p. 137.

refusal to be deluded by "the aesthetic wiles of inspiration" (p. 182). There was a sense in which Hopkins *believed in* direct inspiration; and though Fr. Burns is right in again stressing the point that Hopkins, like all good Jesuits, put "Duty before Beauty," he does not give full weight to the powerful working of the natural creative impulse, as revealed in "Thou art indeed just, Lord" and *To R.B.* For all that, Fr. Burns presents a point of view forcibly and well.

In *Hopkins: Poet of Nature and of the Supernatural*, Fr. M. B. McNamee shows how completely orthodox was Hopkins's attitude to the sacred mysteries of his religion. Fr. W. T. Noon's paper on "The Three Languages of Poetry," though it has flashes of illumination, is for the most part sheer plod down somewhat barren or else well-turned furrows of critical inquiry. On p. 271 he commends Fr. Lahey and Herbert Read for their "careful analysis" of Hopkins's prosody, whereas the truth is that neither critic had made any accurate or authoritative study of it, and the former's scansion of *The Windhover*<sup>1</sup> is extremely faulty.

Fr. A. MacGillivray's *Hopkins and Creative Writing*, though interesting for the light it throws on the American "school of Hopkins," is of dubious value as the rationale of a method of "teaching composition"—for that is what "creative writing" really amounts to. Such remarks as "how to acquire a technique arresting, individual," "that is where Hopkins enters and offers a technical helping hand," "even original artists must take time to study the best work of other artists and learn tricks," and "with profit he might build a poem with the Hopkins bricks" make us wonder what sort of "profit" these pupils are really after. Fr. MacGillivray rightly urges, and ably demonstrates, an intensive study of Hopkins's use of language; but to encourage the uncreative to perpetrate "creative writing" on the Hopkinsian model is perhaps not the best way of upholding the language (as Keats would say), even though the gold-starred or blue-pencilled pastiche is handed back with a kindly "Now go and do otherwise."

The first of the two essays on Hopkins's prosodic theory and practice is by Fr. J. L. Bonn, who examines the poet's theories and various *dicta* concerning Greek metres, and in particular the Dorian. The critic has little difficulty in showing that in relation to theories held to-day and even to those of his own time Hopkins's ideas were eccentric or perverse; but when Fr. Bonn says: "Actually, outside of a certain surface similarity there is very little in common between his sprung rhythm and Greek choral rhythm" I am bound to demur and side with Hopkins, who said that what the *Echoes* are really like

<sup>1</sup> *Life of G. M. H.*, p. 103.





Yet the note on "twindles" (p. 209) is an instance of the clear illumination which is to be found in most parts of this chapter.

The last two essays in the book are interesting critiques of *The Loss of the Eurydice* and *The Wreck of the Deutschland*, by Fr. Y. Watson and Fr. R. R. Boyle respectively. An example of this Jesuit criticism at its frequent best (and these writers are all remarkably alike in tone) is Fr. Watson's comment on the *Eurydice*, ll. 77-8:

This suiting of parts, this shining order in the dead sailor's being is the inscape which takes Hopkins' heart with beauty. His faithful performance of life's tasks has strung the man, has tensed him to the point where he will as readily flash off beauty as a tuned violin string will emit exquisite notes (p. 325).

But in this essay the good points are sometimes overlaid with irrelevancies:

Carisbrooke Castle is situated one mile from Newport. It is an ancient Norman structure, famous particularly as being the place where Charles I was imprisoned for almost a year. The lofty keep is besides of special architectural interest . . .

Before we get back to our sheep-bells and winds off Boniface Down we are told that Ventnor "6,000 inhabitants . . . is a celebrated health resort, charmingly perched on the slopes overlooking the sea"—that is, the bay in which the ship foundered. There is, of course, a grim irony in this fact; but the fault is that Fr. Watson seems to be naïvely unaware of it.

By comparison, Fr. Boyle's study of the "thought structure" of the *Deutschland* is far more taut and satisfying. Yet he too gives currency to some dubious "explications," as on pp. 339-40, where "blown beacon of light" and "ocean of a motionless mind" are surely misunderstood. On the other hand, Fr. Boyle's gloss on "bodes but abides" on p. 341 is the best I have yet seen.

In an Appendix the Editor prints contemporary newspaper accounts which give the "Historical Basis" of the two poems on shipwrecks, and the book is rounded off by a Bibliography containing 579 items, most of them short articles and reviews. On page 261 there is an unfortunate misprint: Hopkins tells Bridges that the sonnets of Wordsworth "have an odious goodness about them." It should, of course, be "goodness"—"an odious goodness and neckcloth."

W. H. GARDNER

## PASTICHE AND POETRY

*On the Hill*, by John Masefield (Heinemann 8s 6d).

*The World's Room*, the Collected Poems of Laurence Whistler (Heinemann 15s).

*Intimation and other Poems, 1941-7*, by H. M. Margoliouth (Oxford University Press 6s).

*Annus Mirabilis and other Poems*, by A. J. McGeoch (Heinemann 6s).

*The Pattern of a Dark*, by John Sundowne (Phoenix Press 6s).

*Beyond the Terminus of Stars*, by Hugo Manning (Phoenix Press 5s).

*Season Ticket*, by D. J. Enright (Editions du Scarabée, Alexandria).

It is inevitable that our Poets Laureate should often lend themselves either to obvious kinds of easy irony or to usage as incidental data for theses. *On the Hill*, however, is honest, unpretentious, unembarrassing and unexciting; sufficiently long and varied to while away, very pleasantly, an empty autumn afternoon. We wander at will among the shades of Bridges, Hardy, Kipling, and undertones of De la Mare, and the *Oxford Book of Modern Verse*; and the echoes are not merely "literary": they are there in the way that an "old contemporary" has a right to his memories. In this sense alone "there is much in the volume to please the different tastes of all Mr. Masefield's friends."

Mr. Whistler's Collected Poems, however, are provocative of more critical animus. When allowance has been made for Rex Whistler's decorations and the overall handsomeness of the production, the poetry itself, one feels, comes of a tradition as vicious as do the various dust-cover praises of "a spiritual-sensuous ecstasy," and "a certain flame-like intensity of living that burns in the lines." To put it like that may seem unscrupulous. But it is difficult to find more than a series of "periphrastic studies in (mostly worn-out) poetical fashions": smooth, slick even, and in the most depressing sense conventional exercises in all the characteristic modes, rhythms and dictions of the Romantics, the pre-Raphaelites and the Georgians. "... the dead stand all about in postures of decay." Not *only* the dead, however, for Mr. Whistler, in his way, has moved with the times. You can have Auden too: his animus, his note of doom—"We must bare the boards or die . . ."; his Communism—"Feed to the flames The first atavistic hunger, the hunger to own"; his creeping Horrors—"Yes, the horrible and subtle folly of Class—Injustice walking in the main street, a chalk-white leper, noticed by nobody"; and even his optimism, transmuted into something rich and strange—Mr. Whistler looks for his "healer" to "the Ankh," "the Spiritual Sun." Or you can have Eliot—the synthetic "essence" of anything from "Gerontion" to the *Four Quartets*. Humankind, alas, cannot bear very much reality; if you're content

with attractive wrapping, sugar-coating, and the belief that there's a salutary pill inside it all; if you like to think that the experience and the meaning of poetry can be divorced, and that you've had the one and missed the trouble of the other—then Mr. Whistler will provide you with an accommodating diet.

Mr. Margoliouth's poems are mainly "religious" and derivative, sometimes explicitly, from Herbert and Vaughan. But one recalls subtle differences of quality between the religious poetry of Donne, Herbert and Vaughan, and that within the seventeenth century itself there is much to make Vaughan seem a major poet. Mr. Margoliouth has stated in verse several of the Metaphysical themes and issues, and his recapture of the tone and cadence of his models is at times a remarkable achievement. Without going into all the desiderata of modern religious poetry it might suffice to return and ponder Aristotle's dictum on the mastery of metaphor.

Mr. McGeoch's poems likewise might be incidental to the raising of general and well-worn questions beyond the scope of an omnibus review: the poverty and deliquescence of the "Nature poetry" tradition, in comparison with the original Wordsworth, or even Hardy; or the differences between poetry and verse-journalism. And it would be impertinent to hang such pompous themes on such a slim and unpretentious peg, whose function is to form a pleasantly mellow and congenial element in certain ranges of national, provincial and middle-class journalism. This function is performed befittingly and well: that it has little to do with poetry is merely a familiar sign of the times.

"Each person's mind is a map or a chart, the contours of which are most known to himself; and art is very often a working out of the figures on the chart, a laying of the restless spirits that haunt it; a creating of a pattern of the dark of a mind as self-defence against a hostile world, or an excuse for ragged edges." Mr. Sundowne's poems "are the beginnings of a working out of a pattern or a chart." Such a manifesto is a fair indication of the intolerable burden laid on a poet by the lack of anything, not merely poetical but religious, ethical, social or political which could be called a living or life-giving tradition. Each must be the light of his own dark, the jar to his own wine, the key to his own lock, must endeavour to emulate the Master Heart that can love without a heart at hand. The twentieth-century's "lost mind's groping for light in dark" is something never dreamed of in the philosophy of Donne or Hopkins at their most "terrible." To believe (and act and write accordingly) that ". . . the greatest of these is Charity" one must be superbly assured of Faith and Hope. To us, it seems, there remain remembrance, anticipation and, in a whole galaxy of inverted commas, "love." And the greatest of these, the prerequisite for the other two, the fragile cup which must hold all we would

salvage, is the bittersweet of personal intimacy. Mr. Sundowne never handles these dangerous elements in the human situation with the cheap facility of the popular "hit" lyricist, and it is fair to say that there is no blatant element of "self-defence" or "excuse" in his verses. But where he is most engaging he seems to achieve little more than unexciting formulations of what have only come to seem truisms through the illuminating genius of a Blake or a Lawrence. Passionate ardour does not successfully fuse the recurrent symbolism of "heart . . . gold . . . green . . . Love . . . and love," which, with its occasional hinting at subtle discriminations, is unconvincing and sometimes breaks down altogether into something both too materialistic in tone and vaguely abstract in language. There is, however, much strength in the weakness of Mr. Sundowne's nostalgia; for much of it there is a technical debt to Hopkins and Owen, and to "Little Gidding," whence many phrases are transposed into a minor key. But it is redeemed from mere plagiarism by occasional laminations of originality in image and rhythm, which leave one interested in Mr. Sundowne's further essays in cartography.

It is conceivable that to the distant compiler of an *Oxford Book of Twentieth Century Verse* some of Mr. Manning's poems will seem more worthily "representative" than much of the Auden, Day Lewis, and MacNiece from which they derive. The pastiche (if that does not sound too derogatory) is lively and vigorous, and often so wholehearted as to have an almost authentic ring. The control of rhythm and alliteration is a little crude, but it is not only the vitality of the imitation but flashes of truly significant imagery like

The restless express across frontiers is moving  
As the eyes of wanderers through tear-stained windows  
Witness their past and their homelands fading,

that make one hope Mr. Manning will progress further beyond the terminus of stars. Whether Auden has been merely a first-stage taxi remains to be seen.

*Season Ticket* is in a variety of ways the most interesting and refreshing of the seven volumes. The chiefly Middle Eastern setting is so potent, so concrete, so delicately and tactfully handled that the most Philistine B.O.R. who ever exclaimed "The Glamorous East: you can have it!" could read many of these poems with genuine, and even nostalgic, pleasure. There are, indeed, many of the obvious kinds of irony and satire to which an Englishman in Egypt might be susceptible. But the poetic technique is never one of mere disgust, complacency, or self-indulgence; it is always serious and responsible, with a self-critical edge, a sane and balanced self-awareness that is apparent at every level, and equally in poems of Western or neutral setting:

In nervous transit from tram to tram,  
 A present past, a dubious present, and a future full of fears.  
 Feet that mistrust the slithering earth: we,  
 The teachers, bearers of diplomas and mysteries still unsolved,  
 We who should guide the children, lest they  
 Should later come to begging.

Nowhere is there vagueness or cliché; there is a profusion of similes,  
 each fresh, vivid, authentic:

the fat brown lizard  
 Plopping from the sunburnt wall like excrement.

and again:

Sometimes even the volatile palm is still,  
 Young dates hang from her cheeks like beads of sweat;  
 The *not juste*, the telling compression of phrase:  
 Those who lie propped against palaces, the indelicate fly  
     Probing their ruined eyes,  
 Or those with upturned faces who crawl on filthy knees,  
     Skilfully revealing their feet that are gone.  
 —Owen without the Pity.  
 Only a stump of arm, a withered leg—that is  
 Their sedentary occupation.

It is in, for example, "Prison Triptych" that Mr. Enright's poetry is weakest: one feels that the deliberately "symbolic" situation and repetitive imagery supports no more than a strong wishfulness and a too intentional loading of the dice. Nearly all these poems, however, bear the hall-mark of shrewd, sensitive, sympathetic and first-hand observation, of a sensibility that is also intellectual and resilient: qualities that are rare enough in modern poetry to be welcomed and encouraged.

PETER WILDING



## LIBERAL ARCHBISHOP

*Cosmo Gordon Lang*, by J. G. Lockhart (Hodder and Stoughton 25s).

ENGLISH Dissent gave to the Anglican See of Canterbury one of its less remembered occupants in the person of Thomas Secker, but Scottish Presbyterianism has contributed to the roll three names of real significance, Archibald Campbell Tait, Randall Thomas Davidson and Cosmo Gordon Lang. It was at evensong in Cuddesdon church on a Sunday in the early summer of 1889 that the last, a newly-elected Fellow of All Souls, with brilliant worldly prospects, decided to give himself to the Anglican ministry. In altered circumstances he might have been seeking ordination in the Church of Scotland or the Church of Rome. Had he not crossed the Border to come to Balliol he might have been the leader of a High Church movement in the Kirk and exercised a deep influence on that body. If Newman had been ten years younger Lang might have died a member of the Sacred College. Once at Oxford he had found the transition from Presbyterianism to Anglicanism an easy one. For his home surroundings had reflected such mild High Churchmanship as then existed in the Church of Scotland. The biographer implicitly suggests that his subject's adhesion to Anglicanism was dictated rather by a sense of the greater seemliness and dignity of Anglican worship than by strictly theological considerations. Lang never embraced the full Tractarian position which "unchurched" the non-episcopal bodies. The future Primate was in fact a man with High Church leanings rather than a High Churchman in the nineteenth-century use of the term. Since Scotsmen are reputed better logicians than Englishmen we may ask why the claims of the Church of Rome did not make more impression on him. Certainly he experienced the attraction of Catholicism and he once dreamed that he stood on the platform at Exeter with a first-class ticket in his hand when Newman appeared bidding him travel third-class with him. But it may be doubted whether a shrinking from austerity was the principal motive which deterred Lang from following Newman. Austerity did not frighten him. When one of Edward Talbot's large staff of curates at Leeds Parish Church he lived in a condemned tenement in squalid surroundings. Nor did he recoil from celibacy. At an early date he decided to remain unmarried and never changed his mind. The two reasons which Lang himself gives for not becoming a Catholic are quite sufficient to account for his not doing so. The first was the Evangelical strain in his blood. The journey to Rome from a Scottish manse is a longer one than that from an Anglican rectory. The second reason was the liberal bent in his mind. Lang's decision to take orders synchronized with the appearance of *Lux Mundi*, an event whose psychological effect is but dimly realized after

the lapse of sixty years. Hitherto what was considered the intellectual vanguard of the Church of England had been drawn from the ranks of the Broad Church party. *Lux Mundi* now showed that High Churchmanship need not be identified with indifference to the intellectual problems of the day and it appeared to many to be a marriage between faith and reason. A mind like that of the young Lang could scarcely fail to contrast the eager earnestness of the *Lux Mundi* School with the state of intellectual torpor so prevalent among Catholics. Thus after a moment of hesitation the future Archbishop came down on the side of the Church of England. Mr. Lockhart might have reminded us that Lang was not the only Archbishop of Canterbury who had nearly become a Catholic in a dream. Edward White Benson who ruled at Lambeth when Lang was ordained had a similar experience as a young man. But whereas Benson's attraction when repelled turned into an anti-Roman phobia, Lang's experience left no feeling of bitterness behind. When the latter, at the surprisingly early age of forty-four, succeeded to the Primacy of the Northern Province there began a new phase in the constitutional history of the Church of England, through a closer association between the two Archbishops than had occurred before in Anglican history. The partnership between Davidson and Lang which began in 1908 lasted for twenty years, and when it ended the government of the Church of England was in effect a species of duumvirate. The fact that neither archbishopric fell vacant between 1908 and 1928 contributed to this end, but other things did so as well. The increase in the number of dioceses and the decline in the number of bishops of outstanding ability favoured the concentration of power in the hands of the archbishops. Lang's personality also did its work. Resolved to be known throughout the province as well as throughout the diocese he made the Archbishop of York a national instead of a merely local figure. But the increasing tendency of the two metropolitans to make public announcements over the heads of the local ordinaries did not win approval everywhere. During Lang's first years at York while the Bishops of the province of Canterbury were harassed by controversies over the creeds, those of his own province, Evangelicals almost to a man, were frittering away their energies in a belated campaign against vestments. It is a defect in Dr. Bell's life of Archbishop Davidson that it gives us nowhere an adequate account of the evolution of its subject's theological opinions. A like criticism must be made of Mr. Lockhart. While he gives us information about Lang's housemaids, his chauffeurs and his motor-cars, our understanding of his theological position is left for us to glean for ourselves. The Doctrinal Commission is not so much as mentioned. Lang himself believed in the Virgin Birth and the Resurrection, but he desired no disciplinary measures against clergymen who did not. He was satisfied if they

would abstain from directing attention to their disbelief in their sermons. In liturgical matters he would have gone further than the Prayer Book of 1928 and would have liked the permitted use of the Communion Office of 1549, though he knew that this was unattainable. Lang's tenure of the Primacy of All England began somewhat inauspiciously. The Lambeth Conference of 1930 contributed but little to promote the cause of church unity and was side-tracked into a heated controversy about an ethical problem sometimes confronting a man with a wife in frail health. Lang held no strong views on this question and was willing to follow the lead of the majority which gave its approval to an ill-judged resolution. But when he retired twelve years later, although it was not possible to point to any single big achievement to his credit, he had nevertheless given evidence of qualities which marked him out as a great Primate, greater in certain respects than Randall Davidson had been or than William Temple was to be. But if Lang was a great Archbishop he was not a popular one. His fondness for the society of great persons might have provoked smiles but could hardly have brought him unpopularity. An injudicious reference made in 1914 to a recollection of Edward VII and William II kneeling at the coffin of Queen Victoria as "a sacred memory" brought Lang much unpopularity at the time but was lived down. Even his famous broadcast on the abdication of Edward VIII, though it incurred for him a great deal of abuse, is an insufficient explanation. For it was for the most part unexceptional, only a few sentences being not very happily phrased. Probably the main reason for Lang's unpopularity was that he was felt to be a Romanizer. He was the first Anglican Primate to wear a mitre and probably the first, at least since the seventeenth century, to go to confession. An incident which Mr. Lockhart might have mentioned is the wrath shown by the Orangemen when the Archbishop who had sponsored the revised prayer-book was invited to preach in the Protestant Cathedral at Armagh on the occasion of the fifteenth centenary of the landing of St. Patrick in Ireland. Lang was a man of unquestionable piety, though the ambition which he always deplored but could never stifle must prevent him from having a place among the most saintly members of his communion. How it was that under the able leadership enjoyed by the Church of England in the half-century covered by the primacies of Davidson, Lang and the two Temples that Church nevertheless slowly but surely declined in influence lies beyond the horizon of this book.

HUMPHREY J. T. JOHNSON

## A PHILOSOPHY OF RECOLLECTION

*Being and Having*, by Gabriel Marcel: a translation by Katharine Farrer of *Etre et Avoir* (Dacre Press 10s 6d).

MRS. FARRER'S translation of *Etre et Avoir* is a satisfying work. In its pages a quiet, rich mind muses with ease and penetration on the hidden springs of being that underlie casual experience. These musings—a Metaphysical Diary running from November 1928 to October 1933, three lectures delivered in the early 'thirties, and an undated paper on "Peter Wust on the Nature of Piety"—are valuable on several counts. His analyses of such specifically human situations as hope, fidelity, scepticism, despair, are masterpieces of insight, and at a deeper level than mere psychological description. Here and there, too, along the steady vein of probing we may catch an odd flash of lapidary phrase that would delight the anthologist. On all these heads *Being and Having* will amply repay the reader. Its primary worth, however, lies elsewhere—in its exposition and use of what, for Marcel, is the basic method of all genuine philosophic enquiry: the method of *recollection*.

Every philosophic method implies a metaphysic. For the existentialist, method and metaphysic are identified. It could not be otherwise. If reality, the only reality which has any meaning for me, is my concrete situation—not merely the momentary, fleeting, surface situations of banal experience, but the fundamental, lived situation that embodies the very core of my personal existence—then, my method of enquiry into reality must consist in the progressive uncovering of *l'être en situation*. It will not be a method of demonstration, but of *monstration*. In *Being and Having* we may see one variety of this phenomenological method at work, and—what is of even greater philosophic interest—read an authoritative account of its nature and inner functioning.

Our initial assurance of reality is a fluid certitude, which clings to the ever-changing contours of experience. The first movement of reflexive thought is to dissociate the items of experience and study them in objective isolation. We are not satisfied until we have turned our global conviction of being into so many problems that can be catalogued and characterized. And in so doing we have lost touch with reality. "In so far, then, as characterization consists in enumerating properties, placing one beside the other, it is an absolutely external proceeding; it misleads us, and never in any circumstances gives us the least opportunity of reaching the heart of that reality which we are trying to characterize. But, speaking philosophically, the really important point to recognize is that characterization implies a certain setting of myself in front of the other, and (if I may say so) a sort of

radical banishment or cutting-off of me from it. I myself bring about this banishment, by myself implicitly coming to a *halt*, separating myself, and treating myself (though I probably am not conscious of so doing) as a thing bounded by its outlines. It is only in relation to this implicitly limited *thing* that I can place whatever I am trying to characterize" (p. 168).<sup>1</sup> Thus, reality becomes for us a collection of objects to be grasped and assessed, filed and docketed—a mere external spectacle, with ourselves as audience. In such a view, the metaphysician is turned into "un sujet dépersonnalisé, ce qui revient à dire que A doit pouvoir se substituer à B, du moment où il présente ce même équipement qui commande toute expérience valable" (*Du Refus à l'Invocation*, p. 11), and thought, which at this level is only thought in general, leads "to the glorification of technics and of the man in the street (a democratization of knowledge which *really ruins it*)" (p. 126).

But reality is not an object to be classified; it is a presence; it is "something unrepresentable yet concrete—something which is more than an idea, and exceeds every idea we can form, something which is a presence. An object as such is not present" (p. 111). The aim of philosophic enquiry is to elucidate this presence; and such elucidation requires a special method, for the enquirer is himself involved in the very data of his investigation. If I am to get to grips with reality, I must go beyond the stage of mere objectivizing reflection. Being is a presence, and "we can only arrive at it by a reflection at one remove, which depends upon an experience of presence" (p. 115). This "reflection at one remove" is *recollection*, that act, as Marcel describes it in *Position et Approches Concrètes du Mystère Ontologique*,<sup>2</sup> "whereby I re-collect myself as a unity; but this hold, this grasp upon myself, is also relaxation and abandon. *Abandon to . . . relaxation in the presence of . . .*—a reflection whereby I ask myself how and from what starting-point I was able to proceed in my initial reflection, which itself postulated the ontological, but without knowing it." A few notes from *Being and Having* will make this clearer.

*Recollection* or *reflexive intuition* is not another name for introspection nor yet just one of the modes of phenomenological analysis, that is, "the analysis of an implicit content of thought, as opposed to a psychological analysis of 'states'" (p. 151). It is, rather, a concomitant awareness which bears not so much on the object of investigation as on myself *as involved*, and necessarily involved, in the very object of investigation. "It seems to me that I am bound to admit that I am—anyhow on one level of myself—face to face with Being. In a sense I can see it. In another sense I cannot say that I see it, since I cannot

<sup>1</sup> Unless otherwise stated, all quotations are from *Being and Having*.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. English trans. in *The Philosophy of Existence*. Harvill Press, 1948.



grasp myself in the act of seeing it. The intuition is not, and cannot be, directly reflected in consciousness. But in turning towards its object, it sheds light upon a whole world of thoughts which lie beneath it" (p. 98). In the zone of primary reflection, Being hardens into a problem to be solved, an object to be viewed; and the mind is taut and harried with its task of characterizing and pigeon-holing. By recollection "not only am I in a position to impose silence upon the strident voices which usually fill my consciousness, but also, this silence has a positive quality. Within this silence I can regain possession of myself. It is in itself a principle of recovery. . . . There is, properly speaking, no such thing as recollection in face of a problem. On the contrary, the problem puts me in some ways into a state of mental tension. Whereas recollection is rather the banishment of tension" (p. 113). Recollection is an inward renewal and refreshment of the spirit after the arid dispersion of objectivizing knowledge. In the quiet of our rediscovered affirmation of being, we break through the surface of humdrum existence and the under-crust of objective problems, and come to rest—with a repose that has nothing of slackness or inertia about it—upon the central core of our existential reality.

In the final analysis, Gabriel Marcel does not give us a philosophy of being, but a philosophy of the approaches to being. His effort is to make each one explicate for himself his own personal "ontological unease." As a propaedeutic to metaphysics, his method is excellent, and many a philosopher could do worse than take an intensive course of recollection. He would then be in fair shape to embark on metaphysics proper. The author of *Being and Having* gets as near to the philosophic domain of being as it is possible to get without actually entering it. What fails him at the last moment is the power to recognize that being is *strictly* intelligible and wholly analogical. The individual overtones of concrete reality render him deaf to the constant ground-note of proportionally common existence. At times he comes near to catching the sound of this thorough-bass, only to turn away once more to listen to the upper harmonies of *l'être en situation*. He would be the first to admit, I think, that he offers us no more than "une métaphysique implicite." What is offered, however, is precious, and the manner of its presentation is entirely delightful. To ask for more would be ungracious.

JOSEPH O'MARA

## A PROPHET OF HOPE

*Towards a New Epoch*, by Nicolas Berdyaev (Geoffrey Bles 6s).

IT is always hard to review the work of a prophet, and it is as a prophet that Berdyaev writes in this volume of essays. The field covered is superficially a wide one, but it is unified by certain concerns.

Although Berdyaev is not primarily a metaphysician, he writes often with great insight on metaphysical issues, specially on those connected with freedom. He recognizes that for any doctrine which takes seriously the ontological primacy of the personal, the notion of freedom is of cardinal import. To its elucidation he makes the very important suggestion that we must not trivialize freedom by treating it as a right, but by seeing it rather as an obligation laid upon us. It is, in his view, the "greatest mystery in the universe" (p. 87): in so far as we can lay hold on its inwardness, we can do so best by attending to creativity as we encounter it in, for instance, the artist.

All this recalls much that was powerfully argued by the late Professor A. E. Taylor, like Berdyaev a profound student of Kant's ethics. "For genius, there is no place in the universe of the determinist." So Taylor would insist; and for him as for Berdyaev, the reality of personal spiritual achievement was as decisive an argument against the metaphysics of Hegel as against those of Laplace.

But of course Berdyaev is not simply concerned with the problem of freedom as a metaphysical issue: for him it is a metaphysical issue which realizes itself with tragic intensity, on the plane of social life. Most of these essays belong to the period of the immediately post-war years, and embody his hopes and fears, as he watches the part played in them, particularly by his own people. All his life the burden of the Russian Revolution has lain heavy on his mind: in these essays certainly the note of hope predominates over that of fear. He believes that the Russia of the Revolution may yet mediate to Western Europe some kind of solution of the most intractable contradictions of its social life. He comes, of course, to the phenomenon of the Revolution with a profound knowledge of the history, the traditions, the culture of the people by whom and for whom it was made: and in these essays he still hopes that from Russia will be given to the West that pattern of a truly "communal humanism" which will eliminate all the familiar contradictions listed by the social philosopher, but experienced existentially by any man who tries to measure up his actual situation in society.

And yet of course Berdyaev knows that there is a darker side. He does not mention Katyn or Karaganda; yet he is oppressed by the memory of tyranny, and shocked by the condemnation of Zoschenko and Akmatova. These are the meditations of a prophet: as such they

must be received. The true prophet is never a *déraciné*, and therefore we must accept Berdyaev as a Russian, struggling with the problems presented by the present phase of the history of his people.

If we go to him in that spirit, there is very much we can learn from him. He is, after all, one of the very few Christians who has taken the measure of Karl Marx and who has really confronted the Marxists. Again and again in this book he comments on Marx with the peculiar insight that we could perhaps only expect from one who was at the same time a profound student of Solovyev, Dostoevsky, Pascal and Kierkegaard. Very few Christians can speak quite as he can from the inside of the upheavals in Russia that have issued in the terrible phenomenon of Stalinism.

Finally, we may deplore the note of catastrophism that keeps intruding in this book. Yet Berdyaev remains the prophet. His ultimate note is optimistic: like Père de Lubac and others, he looks to a future wherein the tremendous creative powers of mankind, manifested in his purely technical achievement, will be directed toward truly constructive and human ends. In the meantime certainly "the fountains of the great deep are being broken up"; the accepted stabilities of the western Europeans are being challenged. No longer, for instance, does the "rule of law" furnish a true middle term between the domain of charity and the world of violence. In modern war, even in the justest cause, "what is rational becomes the slave of what is just mad" (p. 44). So inevitably we turn not to civilization for the final justification of our world and experience, but to the individual Christian, to the saint, and beyond them to Christ Himself, Incarnate Love whom alone the many waters cannot quench. And in this emphasis I confess myself I judge Berdyaev right.

D. M. MACKINNON

## CORRESPONDENCE

TO THE EDITOR OF THE MONTH

27th December, 1949.

DEAR SIR,

If you can still spare some of your valuable space for discussion of the subject, may I comment as briefly as possible on some of the points raised in Mr. Harvey's interesting letter on the Wilton Diptych in your December issue? In making my comments, I think it will be best to adhere to the headings he adopts.

(1) *The King's apparent age*.—If we are to accept the head of Richard II from the Winchester window as a perfectly reliable contemporary portrait, then we are forced to assume, not only that he remained beardless for several years of his adult manhood, though eventually he conformed to the more usual contemporary fashion, but also, what seems very improbable, that he remained adolescent, indeed almost childish, in appearance until he was between twenty-seven and thirty years of age. But if we must make assumptions, would it not be more reasonable to suppose that the glass painter, following the custom by that time established, of using a cartoon, whether wholly or in part, not once only but perhaps many times over, may have worked in painting this head, from a "pattern" already some years out of date? The head, as part of a cartoon for glass, is not at all likely to have been drawn from life. That in the Diptych, however, has every appearance of being a true portrait taken from life; and the other figures in the picture, unlike those in the Winchester glass generally, are drawn in a manner characteristic rather of the earlier than of the later years of the reign. A comparison of the figures of the royal Saints in the Diptych with the Saints in the west window (1396-99) at Canterbury (e.g. Bernard Rackham, *The Ancient Glass of Canterbury Cathedral*, 1949, colour plate XIV) and those formerly in the Winchester windows and now in the Victoria and Albert Museum (*id.*, *Guide to the Collections of Stained Glass*, 50-51), dated 1393-1400, suggests that an almost identical date for all these figures is virtually out of the question, though probable for the two latter groups. Most of the Canterbury figures and some of the few surviving from the Winchester windows have in a marked degree the very rounded, rather heavy faces, "pug" noses and small eyes found in miniatures of the last years of the century; but all these characteristics are entirely absent from all the figures in the Diptych. However, it is arguable that this work may have been that of a man nearing the close of his career who continued to paint entirely in the earlier style; but then it is almost impossible to believe that an ageing artist would have been able to execute the extraordi-

narily minute tooling and exquisitely delicate painting which are among the picture's most notable features.

(2) *Costume*.—The King's rather high collar does not, in fact, spread outward in the "ruff" characteristic of the houppelande from c. 1380 onwards; but it has within it a band of upstanding gold fringe, like another (pendent) on the sleeve, which may perhaps be a fore-runner of the "ruff." I do not think that the costume of "weepers" on Edward III's tomb can be cited as unquestionable evidence regarding the development of the houppelande at this date, since, with the exception of one boyish figure, clad only in a long cote-hardie and long hose, all the male figures, represent men of mature years, who, as Kelly and Schwabe point out, did not readily follow new fashions as did the young "bucks." The Warwick tomb, of course, takes us slightly further away in point of date from the time, roughly a decade during which the houppelande is generally considered to have developed, but the same remarks might apply here also. At Earls Colne in Essex "weepers" on a tomb dated c. 1371-1375 almost all wear the cloak caught on the right shoulder by buttons, but one, rather younger in appearance than most of the others, has what must be an early version of the houppelande, three-quarter-length, fastening high under the chin in front, from whence it falls in the characteristic way, but ruffless and with narrow sleeves.

(3) *Badges*.—Those on the King's robe in the Diptych, as Mr. Harvey points out, closely resemble those on the effigy; but heraldry does not normally show marked variations of style within so short a period as twenty years (1377-c. 1397). Thus, if the date of the Diptych were ever to be established at 1377 beyond any possibility of doubt, I do not think anyone would be prepared, after comparison with the White Hart on the obverse, to pronounce for that reason with complete confidence on the exact date of the wall-painting of the Hart in Westminster Abbey.

Further, Richard's badges must have been repeated hundreds of times on innumerable objects during what was a comparatively short reign, and being doubtless in constant request from the "pattern books" of the many craftsmen working for him, whether they were responsible for the recurrent pageants, like Gilbert Prince, or for the provision of goldsmith's work or embroideries, would have changed the less readily on that account. The eagles displayed may be either those of Anne of Bohemia or those associated with the *pallium*; but if they are hers, then there seems to be no reason for the omission of her arms, which are seen in the west window at Canterbury in company with those of Isabella of France.

(4) *Provenance*.—I am afraid that, under this head, I have demonstrated the dangers inherent in vague modes of expression rather than



those inseparable from trying to prove a negative; for I should have said, to express my meaning, "any great man *intimately* connected" with the King *himself*, rather than with the Court. I was thinking, not of courtiers in general, not even of those exceptionally prominent among them, like Bishop Braybrooke, but of those who belonged to the *intimate circle about Richard himself*, who one and all, with the exception of his close friend Burley, were connected with him by family ties. To them, Gilbert Prince appears to have acted as a "family painter"; and, further, it has seemed to me a striking fact that, within this circle of the highest in the land, there was apparently no one who employed any but English painters, notably Prince. But I am, of course, prepared to find evidence appearing sooner or later to show that the Black Prince, Lancaster, or even Richard himself, patronized a foreign painter at one time or another. So far, however, it seems entirely lacking.

(5) *Miscellanea*.—A small piece of evidence in support of the belief that Prince may have been the painter of the Diptych, with its marked resemblance to an illumination, was omitted from my article, among other things, in an effort to diminish its length; an extract from E. 101/401/5 shows that c. 1383-1386 he received payment not only for items such as painted banners, etc., but also "*pro illuminacione*."

Yours faithfully,

E. W. TRISTRAM

DEAR SIR,

2nd January, 1950.

May I touch upon a few of the matters raised by Professor Tristram in his comment on my letter?

(1) *The King's apparent age*.—It seems most unlikely that the portrait in glass at Winchester College was made from a "stock" cartoon when it would be seen by the King in person as soon as it was in position. Wykeham's account roll shows (1) that two carts were used for a period of nine days between 1 April and 30 September, 1393, to bring glass for the College windows from Oxford; (2) that the King visited Wykeham at Winchester on 25 July and again for two days, 16 and 17 September.

The lights now in the Victoria and Albert Museum come from the side windows of the Chapel; are by different hands from the east window; and, as shown by Mr. Bernard Rackham, the use of "crowned H" and "crowned W" suggests a date between Henry IV's accession (30 September, 1399) and Wykeham's death (27 September, 1404).

The apparent incompatibility between an "aged artist" who might continue an earlier style, and the minute and delicate work of the Diptych can be resolved by accepting an earlier suggestion of mine

(*Gothic England*, 1947, p. 65) that the actual painter of the Diptych was Thomas Litlyngton, assistant to Gilbert Prince, and his successor as King's Painter.

(2) *Costume*.—Whether or no it constitutes a "ruff," the King's high collar belongs to a radically new fashion in dress. It is virtually certain that this fashion was introduced from the French Court, and there seems no positive evidence that the high collar existed in England before c. 1395. What more likely occasion can be suggested for its adoption by Richard II than the Anglo-French *rapprochement*?

*General*.—While Professor Tristram's detailed case succeeds in connecting the Diptych's symbolism with the Coronation, it fails to dispose of a series of major difficulties, of which the heraldic points collected by Miss Clarke are the chief. The two arguments, both strong, are not incompatible. They can be harmonized by supposing that the scheme of the Diptych was devised by the King himself as the symbolic kernel of his defence of the Royal Prerogative. The Coronation, thus deliberately commemorated, would have an analogy to the sending to Boniface IX of a book of the miracles of Edward II in 1395 (*Devon: Issues of the Exchequer*, p. 259). It is difficult to suggest a possible author for this complicated symbolism in 1377; in 1395 it becomes a highly probable expression of the King's state of mind.

Yours faithfully,

JOHN H. HARVEY

DEAR SIR,

9th January, 1950.

May I remark briefly on Mr. Harvey's second letter?

(1) *The King's apparent age*.—We can hardly believe that the King sat to the glass-painter; and royal portraits, other than those taken from life, have often been slightly behind the times, without drawing objections from their originals. But there is an alternative explanation of the youthful character of the Winchester head, which at least does not involve doubtful assumptions about Richard's appearance c. 1393; and this is that adopted by Mr. Harvey himself to account for the equally youthful head in the Diptych, if conjecturally dated c. 1395—namely, commemoration of the Coronation at the period of "deliberate fortification of the royal prerogative" after the victory over the Appellants in 1389. If he adopts this explanation in the one case, I do not see why he does not do so in the other, especially, in view of other resemblances between the window and the painting, and since the former would have afforded a better field for "royal propaganda" than the latter.

But to adopt this explanation in respect of the head in the window would not, of course, involve the acceptance of an identical date for

the Diptych. It is almost impossible to believe that Litlyngton, King's Painter in succession to Gilbert Prince, was still painting, *c.* 1395, in a style then already superseded; for there is no evidence to show that he was an oldish man, but rather the contrary.

(2) *Costume*.—The King's collar, though high, is not in this respect of the exaggerated type characteristic of the period *c.* 1395–*c.* 1420 (though already in process of modification *c.* 1410); for this type rose at the back to well above the level of the lobes of the ears. (Kelly and Schwabe, p. 27, pls. XIII, XIV, and XV; and fig. 20, *a* and *b*.)

Yours faithfully,

E. W. TRISTRAM

DEAR SIR,

16th January, 1950.

In his notes on current exhibitions in *THE MONTH* of last January, Mr. Denys Sutton gave expression to the opinion, so often voiced and repeated by critics, that England has "lagged behind the main stream of European painting," and that the work of our own painters is insignificant and a sufferer from "chronic debility." Since this opinion has not yet, I think, worn so thin as the facts warrant, and since too many are still under the domination of the ward-bosses of the Rive Gauche, may I record that my own acquaintance with the facts leads me to a contrary opinion?

To measure English painting against that of Europe, a country against a continent, is indeed to set a stiff standard of comparison. But, with the exception of France, what European country is there which at the moment, or within recent memory, can show more than an odd artist or two, like Spain's Picasso and Gris, or Switzerland's solitary Klee, of conspicuous achievement? The School of Paris is rich in achievement, but the great figures belong to the end of a generation, not to the beginning or even the middle of one. Of course, there may be young painters whose work has not yet attracted notice, but such work as I have seen shows few signs of promise, and less creative energy than is to be found in England.

To Mr. Sutton our contribution to the art of the time would seem, at best, "tasteful and charming." But are not these absurd adjectives to characterize the work of Stanley Spencer or Augustus John, Henry Moore in his water colours, Graham Sutherland, Matthew Smith or David Jones? As the unrivalled painters of France Mr. Sutton named Braque and Picasso, than whom Mr. John and Mr. Smith are little older, and the others I have named are all much younger. It would clearly be invidious to suggest a complete list.

Yours faithfully,

JOHN ROTHENSTEIN

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